



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

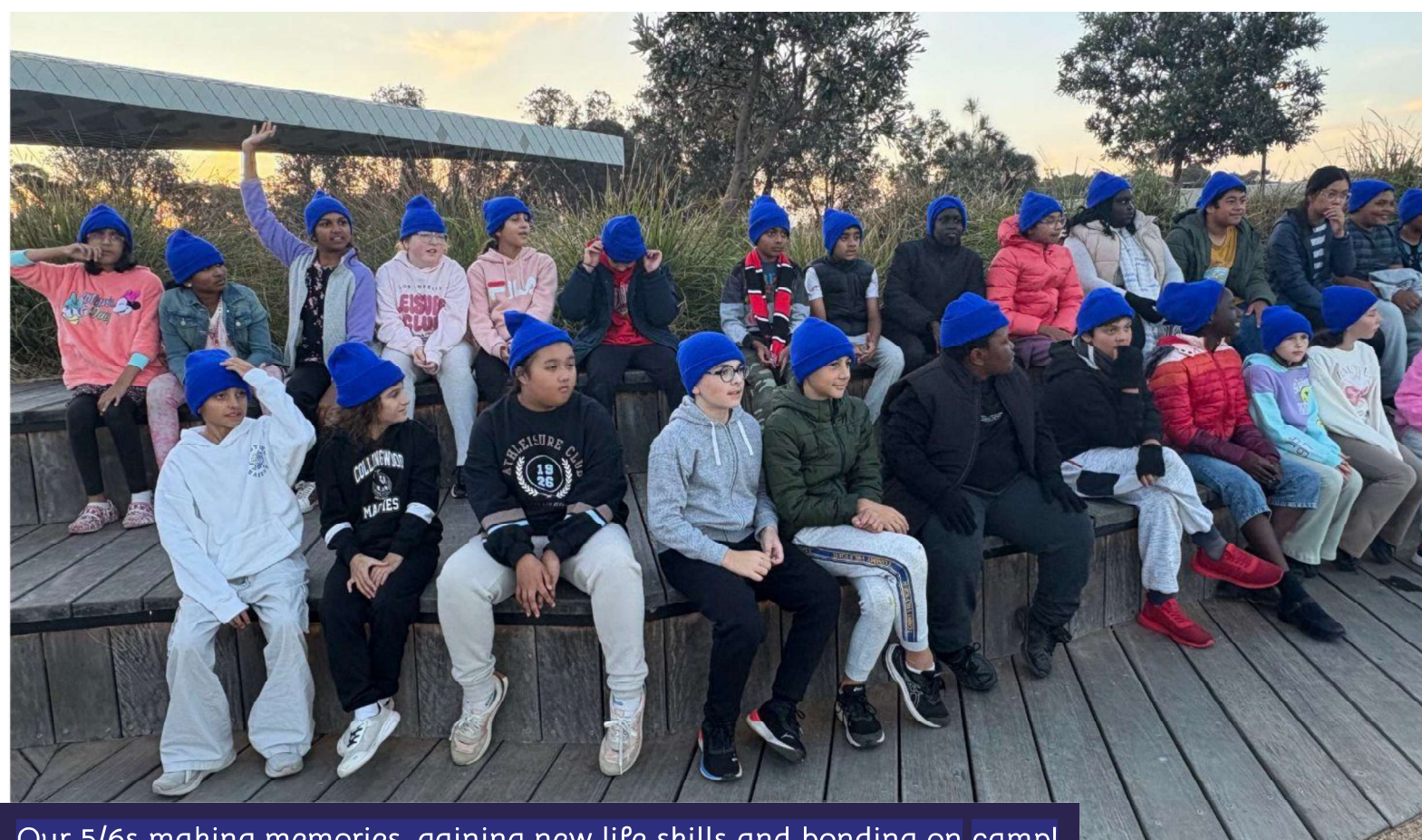


ST GERARD'S SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Term 1, Week 10

04 April 2025



Our 5/6s making memories, gaining new life skills and bonding on camp!

PROJECT COMPASSION LENTEN PRAYER

God of our journey
we are all pilgrims of hope
brought together by your love
and your wish that we may all be one.

We pray that in this Year of Jubilee
when we are called to greater justice
and care for our common home
that we may **Unite Against Poverty**.

May we work in unity for the freedom
of the oppressed and the renewal of creation.

May our compassionate minds
and generous hearts help bring about a
world where all can live in peace.

May our Lenten pilgrimage of
fasting, almsgiving and prayer
bring us closer to your loving heart.

We ask this in the name of Jesus.

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,

Here we are at the end of Term 1 and rather than finishing school just as Holy Week starts we will conclude the school holidays just after Easter Monday. While this is unusual, it does provide us with the chance to celebrate the Resurrection closer to Easter Sunday.

Reflecting back over the term it has been one where we have provided various opportunities to educate and develop our children both in and out of the classroom.

The term started with **Give Me 5 Week** that included our **family activity night**. Our **3 Way Conversations** brought together our families, students and teachers to establish the best way to support the learning of our children. **Before School Reading in the Library on Wednesday mornings** continued to be well attended and our **Year 6 Leadership badges and hats** are being worn proudly and those wearing them are having a positive impact on our school. Our **Year 3 and 5 children participated in the annual NAPLAN assessments** and last Friday we celebrated all the cultures we are so fortunate to have here at St Gerard's through our **Harmony Day activities**.

From a faith perspective, we had a number of children join members of the **Parish Legion of Mary** in the church to **pray the Rosary** at certain lunchtimes. **Year 3 children celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation** for the first time and we actively participated in **whole school and level masses** including our **Beginning of School Year and the parish Ash Wednesday mass**. Some of our **Year 6 Leaders attended a special mass at St Patrick's Cathedral to celebrate the Feast Day of St Patrick and Catholic Education Week**.

This week, families and parishioners were invited to come and **visit our *Passion Gallery Walk* which was set up in the PAC**. These pieces have been created by our children and **depict the Stations of The Cross**, which are foundation aspects of our faith. It was wonderful to see so many visitors attending over the course of the week. **I would like to thank Mrs Theodore for coordinating the creation of these pieces and presenting them in such a prayerful and meaningful format.**

Health and fitness wise, we had our **after school AUSKICK** clinics which was again well attended. Our **Whole School Athletics Carnival** was a highlight with plenty of athletic talent and school spirit on display. We had a number of **Ride/ Walk to School Days** which are always well supported and a great way to start a day of learning. **Subway Lunch Days** are always popular and something our children really look forward to.

We also had **3 Open Days** to show what we offer here at St Gerard's and it was wonderful to meet so many prospective families.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

This week we also had our **Year 5/6 Camp** from Wednesday 2 - Friday 4 April at CYC *The Island* (Phillip Island). This Camp allowed our children to have experiences outside the 'normal' school offerings and was a great way to develop new skills and build relationships. There were plenty of highlights and stories that will be shared and I would like to **thank Mrs O'Brien, Mrs Te, Mrs Munro and Mrs Zelic** who gave up their time to ensure that our children had a wonderful experience. Their care and support of our children over the 3 days was wonderful to witness.

We are always looking for ways to have families involved in the learning opportunities we provide for our children. If there are any adults that would like to help us either in the classroom, for specific events (such as excursions or cooking) or whole school activities, you are always most welcome. **Please note that as part of our Child Safety Policies and Procedures all helpers require a Working With Children Check and need to have come to a Volunteer Induction Session.** Please contact me via principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au , Seesaw or in person so we can arrange a time.

I would again like to draw your attention to some **important dates for Term 2**. We have 2 School Closure Days planned which allows for Professional Development and dispenses Time in Lieu that our staff have accrued. Due to the availability of Professional Development activities, advice from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) and public holidays, we will be having school closure days on **Monday 28 April and Friday 6 June**.

The first week of Term 2 starts on Tuesday 22 April and with the ANZAC Day public holiday on Thursday 25 April the first week is a 3 day week. We then have the first of our School Closure days the following Monday 28 April. I appreciate that School Closure days can be challenging for families. OSHC will run a full day program if they have sufficient numbers which may be an option. Please contact Marina (OSHC Coordinator) if you would like further information.

I am asking families to **please park in the designated parking bays** when dropping off and picking up their children. I have had a number of requests to send a reminder as we are seeing an increase in people parking in other areas which creates blockages, frustration and safety concerns. The safety of our children and the school community is something we all need to be mindful of and actively participate in. I thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Lastly, a reminder that **Term 2 starts on Tuesday 22 April**.

Have a Happy and Holy Easter and a wonderful holiday.

Paul Cowan
PRINCIPAL



Religious News

Key Dates

Other Important Dates for Religion

17th April:	Holy Thursday
18th April:	Good Friday Day of Fast and Abstinence
19th April:	Holy Saturday
20th April:	Easter Sunday

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



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 were 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.

Fourth Week of Lent



Joshua 5:9–12 | Ps 33:2–7. R. v.9 | 2 Corinthians 5:17–21 | Luke 15:1–3. 11–32

One of the most beautiful expressions in the Bible comes from the prophet Ezekiel (Ezk 11:19). 'Thus says the Lord, I will take their hearts of stone and give them hearts of flesh.' It is a call to be tender and compassionate.

You would need a heart of stone not to be affected by the stories we encounter today. Most of us have heard the story of the two sons in today's Gospel over and over. The brilliance of the way Jesus tells stories is that it still gets under our skin. Here are two young men who think they can live on their own terms. One has a sense of entitlement and demands his share of his father's estate which he then squanders. He is finally prepared to eat humble pie and find his way home. The other son has a different sense of entitlement. He believes that his hard work and reliability should provide him with a greater share of his father's love. At different times in our life, we can relate more to one or other of these people. Jesus implies that they are both blind to the way God's love works and that they both need to grow. They have both been dead and now must come to life.

The story we encounter this week is also deeply moving. Irene, aged 25, lives in the Kongolo region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Her father was killed during a war and Irene lived with her mother on very meagre resources, often going hungry for extended periods of time. Irene first became pregnant as a teenager and later had to raise her two children on her own, with the support of her mother. As a single mother, it was challenging for Irene to care for her two sons without a stable income.

Irene's life changed after she participated in the Youth Capacity Strengthening program, run by Caritas Australia's partner, Caritas Kongolo. Through the program, she undertook training in sewing and livestock farming, enabling her to generate income to support her family.

Our second reading today reminds us that we are 'ambassadors for Christ.' St Paul says, 'for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation.' Let us all be part of building that new creation, setting the world to rights as best we can. Our part is to reach out in compassion and love to heal the wounds of the whole human family. Let us all *Unite Against Poverty* as pilgrims of hope in this Year of Jubilee.



Prayer

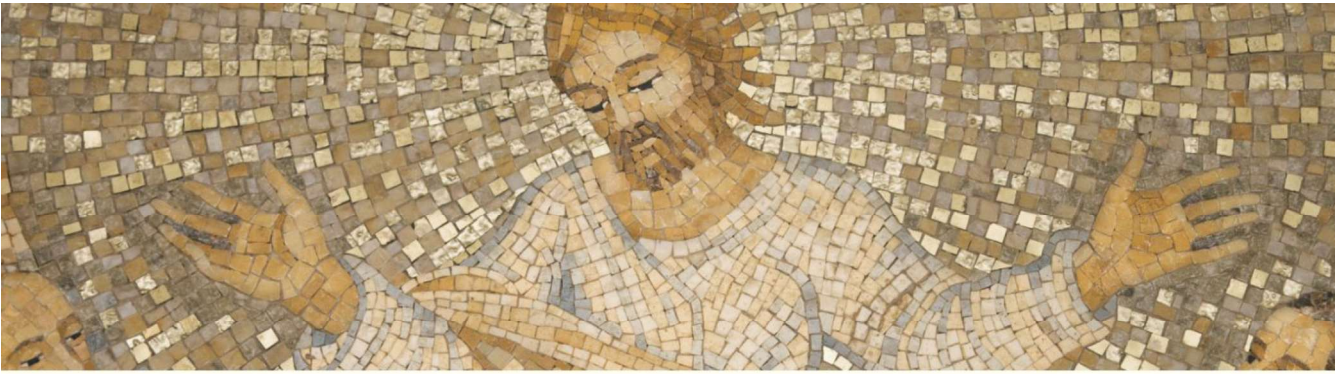
We pray for those driven away from their homes by violence, persecution or poverty, especially women. May our hearts be open to do all we can to rebuild the lives of others through supporting Caritas Australia and the work of Project Compassion. May we be instruments of God's peace and pilgrims of hope.

Amen

Photo: Irene teaches other women how to sew after participating in the Caritas-supported youth empowerment program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Credit: Arlette Bashizi/Caritas Australia

projectcompassion.org.au

Brown Murals Church News



‘THE PASSION’ GALLERY WALK (STATIONS OF THE CROSS)

REFLECTING ‘THE PASSION’ THROUGH COLLAGE AND COLOUR IN VISUAL ART

A VISUAL & SPIRITUAL REFLECTION OF CHRIST’S JOURNEY.

This term, the students of St. Gerard’s have embarked on a creative journey, using the power of visual art to bring to life The Passion through the Stations of the Cross. Their dedication and artistic talents concluded this week in a stunning Gallery Walk, where the school community and Parish were invited to experience a visual and spiritual reflection of Christ’s journey.

Each station was carefully crafted using the visual art element of collage, allowing students to explore texture, layering, and color to capture the deep emotions and significance of each moment. Through collaboration, they worked to express the mood and meaning of the Stations, fostering a deeper understanding of their faith and the story of Christ’s sacrifice.

The students extend their heartfelt gratitude to the school community and Parish for their support and for taking the time to walk through their artwork. This experience has not only strengthened their artistic skills but also deepened their connection to their faith, demonstrating how art can be a powerful medium to share and reflect on spiritual beliefs.

As we continue our journey in faith and creativity, may these artworks serve as a reminder of Christ’s love and the importance of reflection during this holy season. Thank you for being part of our Gallery Walk!

Ms Theodore
(Visual Arts Specialist Teacher)



Exploring The Passion through Shadow Art with the Foundation and Year 1/2 students.

Brown Murals Church News



The families in our school and Parish visiting.

Collaborative art series reflecting The Stations of the Cross.



A JOURNEY THROUGH THE PASSION EXHIBITION...



Exploring The Passion through collage and mixed media.

Reading Before School

ST GERARD'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL



READING BEFORE SCHOOL

EVERY WEDNESDAY 8:30 AM

Join Mrs O'Brien in the
library for some quiet
reading time with a good
book and receive a
Reading Before School
raffle ticket.



Reading Before School



Reading Before School

Congratulations to the Reading Before School Winners!!!

Oscar
Joanne
Jesston
Layla
Abel
Thomas



Reading Challenge

Victorian Premiers Reading Challenge

Students have been sent home with their login and passwords for the Victorian Premiers Reading Challenge.

Please follow the steps below:

1. Visit <https://vprc.eduweb.vic.gov.au/home>
2. Select student
3. Then select VPRC login see below

4. Finally type in the username and passcode.

Please record the names of the books your child/ren are reading.

Happy Reading Children!!!



School coordinator or student

Sign In

Home based readers and early childhood participants

Register For the Challenge

Challenge Booklist

Search Booklist

Year 5 Camp



Year 5 Camp



Year 5 Camp



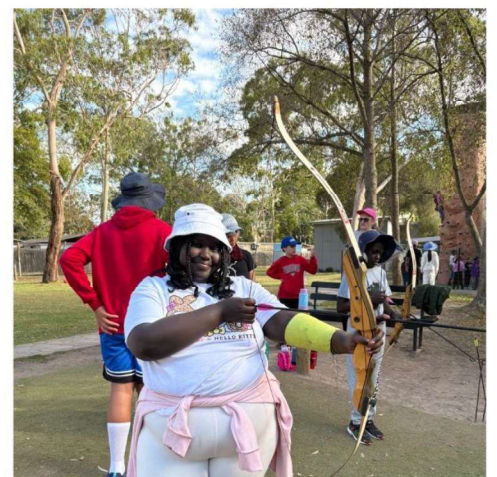
Year 5 Camp



Year 5 Camp



Year 5 Camp



Wellbeing



What's resilience?

Resilience refers to the ability to manage everyday stressors and challenges.

Resilience enables people to shift back along the mental health continuum towards good mental health. A child or young person's ability to be resilient can depend upon many things and can change depending upon their situation. Importantly, specific situations or events that one child or young person may find challenging, another may not. Learn more about how you can help [build resilience in children](#).

A child or young person who is resilient might:

- be optimistic
- use positive self-talk for encouragement
- have a positive sense of self
- identify and express their feelings and thoughts
- not hide away from strong feelings
- have helpful, age-appropriate strategies to manage their emotions when upset
- rearrange their plans to work around an unexpected situation
- have a sense of agency or responsibility
- keep on trying if something doesn't work out and use their judgment about when to stop
- hold a sense of purpose or hope for the future
- actively ask for help if they need it

feel a sense of attachment to family, their learning community and to learning.

Wellbeing



Give Me 5 News

Students who display the expectations present on the school Matrix are rewarded with a raffle ticket from their classroom teacher. Once a month the raffle tickets from each class are collected and drawn during Friday's assembly.

The raffle tickets were drawn and the lucky winners are:

1. Alfie
2. Rafael
3. Gion
4. Ivan
5. Sanaya
6. Ameya

These students will be rewarded with a special surprise.



Wellbeing

Wurundjeri Way Project

We are excited to share some wonderful news! St Gerard's has been awarded a grant from Landcare to help enhance the biodiversity of our school. This project, called Wurundjeri Way, aims to create a vibrant and sustainable garden area that not only beautifies our school grounds but also supports local wildlife and encourages environmental awareness.

The first class to contribute their thoughts and ideas to this project was 3/4S. The students were eager to discuss how the garden area outside their classrooms should look. They explored a range of topics, including the challenges of dealing with weeds and hard soil. The class worked together to brainstorm creative solutions to these problems, demonstrating their problem-solving skills and teamwork.

One key aspect of their discussion focused on the importance of supporting our native animals. The students proposed installing nesting boxes and planting native plants that would provide food and shelter for local wildlife. By incorporating these ideas, Wurundjeri Way will become a space that benefits both our environment and the creatures that call it home.

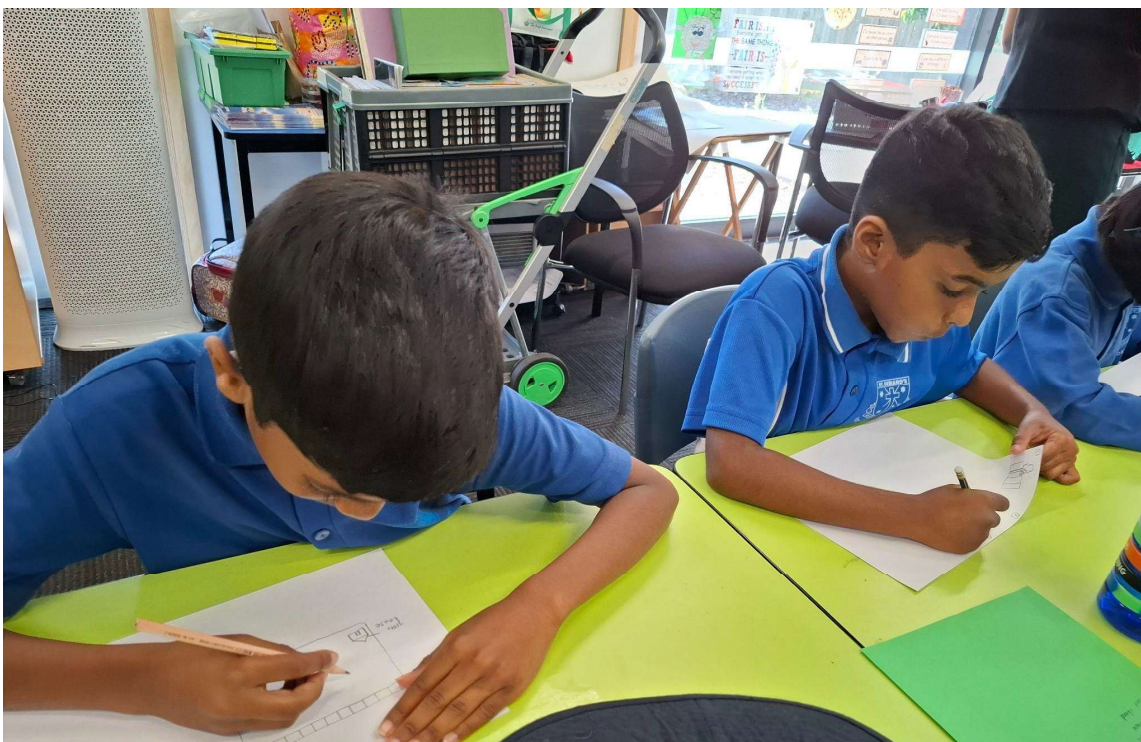
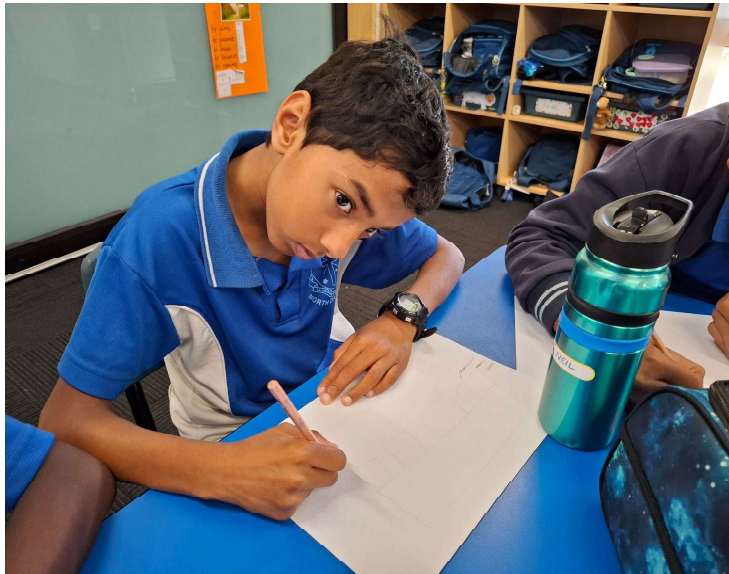
We can't wait to see how the project evolves in the coming months. Next term, all classes will have the opportunity to get involved and contribute to making Wurundjeri Way a reality. Stay tuned as we work together to increase the biodiversity in our school and create a lasting legacy for our community and the environment!



Wellbeing



Wellbeing



Important Dates / Info

April

- **22nd April (Tuesday) - Term 2 starts**
- 23rd 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- **25th ANZAC Day public holiday**
- **28th School Closure Day - Time in Lieu acquittal**
- 30th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library

May

- 2nd Year 5/6 Gala Day
- 7th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 9th Mother's Day Activities
- 13th Open Day
- 14th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 15th Ride to School Day
- 15th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 15th First Communion Family Workshop 6:30pm
- 15th Confirmation Family Workshop 7:30pm
- Whole School Literacy Evening 6-7pm
- 21st 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 21st Open Day
- 22nd SUBWAY Lunch
- 26th National Sorry Day
- 28th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 29th Open Day

June

- 4th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- **6th School Closure Day - Staff Professional Learning - Religious Education**
- 8th Pentecost Sunday
- **9th King's Birthday Public Holiday**
- 11th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 12th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 12th Ride to School Day
- 18th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 19th First Communion Reflection Day
- 22nd First Communion at 10:30am (Feast of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ)
- 24th Confirmation Reflection Day
- 25th 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 26th Bishop Tony Ireland visiting Year 6 students for Confirmation
- 28th Sacrament of Confirmation 5:30pm

July

- 2nd 8:30 - 8:40 Reading before school in the library
- 3rd Subway Lunch
- **4th End of Term 2 - School finishes 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.

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.



NORTH DANDNENONG MASALA JFC

FRIDAY 14TH MARCH, 5:00PM - 6:00PM
LOIS TWOHIG RESERVE, DANDENONG NORTH
AUSKICK - UNDER 13S

BOYS & GIRLS
FREE
REGISTER NOW VIA
QR CODE!



Experience the
Mazenod advantage.

mazenod.vic.edu.au

Book a tour →



Bookings essential

2025 Open Day: Wednesday 5th March
2025 Tours: 1st May / 24th Jul / 5th Aug / 16th Oct
Year 7/2027 Applications Close Friday 15th August 2025

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
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.

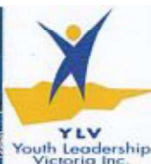
Orders received by Friday will be delivered to the school the following Thursday

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

0354 9345 or email info@agsprints.com.au



OSHC IMPORTANT UPDATE

📢 Important Fee Update – Effective March 24, 2025 📢

Dear Parents & Guardians,
To continue providing high-quality care and professional staff, Youth Leadership Victoria will be adjusting OSHC fees.

New Fees:

- ✅ Before School Care: Casual \$25 | Permanent \$20
- ✅ After School Care: Casual \$30 | Permanent \$25
- ✅ Vacation Care/Pupil Free Day: \$72.50

We appreciate your support and understanding.

For any questions, please contact **Rita Strachan** 0412 958 601.

Thank you for being part of our OSHC community! 🎉

Notice Board



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

- Bethany Yr 6
- Aryan Yr 3



- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- Ukraine Support Fund
- Springvale Indoor Sports - Indoor Soccer
- North Dandenong MASALA Junior Football club (AFL)
- Mazenod College Open Day & School Tours Info
- St John's Regional College - Open Day Information
- Softball School Holiday 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.