

ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

TERM 1 - WEEK 4



24th FEBRUARY, 2023



Our students received ashes on their foreheads last Wednesday, reminding us of the call to repentance and renewal during Lent.

Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the Lenten season, was observed last Wednesday. Our children participated in the tradition of receiving ashes on their foreheads as a public expression of faith and humility. Lent is a period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Let us take this opportunity to reflect, renew, and deepen our commitment to living a life of compassion and generosity.



An Ash Wednesday Prayer for St Gerard's

Heavenly Father, as we begin the season of Lent on this Ash Wednesday, we ask for your guidance and strength in our journey towards spiritual renewal. Help us to reflect on our lives and turn away from our sins, so that we may grow closer to you.

We pray for all members of St Gerard's, that we may support and encourage one another in our Lenten practices. May our sacrifices and acts of service bring us closer to each other and to you.

We ask for your blessings on our school and all those who teach and learn within its walls. May we be a community that reflects your love and grace, now and always.....Amen.



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

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

We have come to the end of another week with a range of learning opportunities for our children and support for our families.

On **Tuesday** we had our **3 Way Conversations which allowed** for our students, their families and teachers to come together and share information. A key aspect of children learning effectively is having the right support around them. If you have not met with your child's teacher please contact them to arrange a time.

On **Wednesday morning** we had '**Before School Reading' in the Library** which allows our students and their families to come **from 8.15am** and read together. There is a standing invitation to all our children and their families to come along.

As a school we attended **Ash Wednesday Mass** which marks the start of the Church season of **Lent**. This is a time for **Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving** which are key aspects of our faith. It was wonderful to be able to celebrate this important day with the St Gerard's Parish.

Also on **Wednesday we had the first of our 3 Auskick clinics** which occur straight after school. There are 2 more sessions **on Wednesday 1 March and Wednesday 8 March**. This is a wonderful opportunity to develop some AFL and social skills and will hopefully lead to our children becoming part of the local Auskick Program.

On **Thursday evening** we had our **First Reconciliation Family Workshop**. It was lovely to connect with these families and work with them to support their children in this important step in their faith journey. Reconciliation is a key pillar of our faith with us recognising we are human and therefore need to ask for forgiveness and forgive others.

Today (Friday) our **Year 3 - 6 children** were involved in the second in a series of **basketball clinics** conducted by Dandenong Basketball Association. Basketball is a great team sport and one that we see being played by our children at lunchtimes.

Lastly, a reminder that **next Friday 3 March** we have our school **Athletics Carnival** which will be held at **Knox Athletics Track, Bunjil Way, Knoxfield**. This is a wonderful opportunity for our whole school to come together, have fun and develop/display our sporting skills. Families are more than welcome to come to support our children. Please ensure that the **Medical Information and Permission Form is returned to school by next Tuesday 28 February**. This promises to be a wonderful day.

Continue to stay safe and God bless.

Paul Cowan

PRINCIPAL

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Class Masses

This year, our classes will be hosting Class Masses. This is a unique chance for all members of our St. Gerard's community to come together and actively participate in the planning and organisation of our prayers. Classes will send invitations closer to the date. All families are cordially invited to join us.

Class Mass Timetable for Semester One:

5/6O:	Thursday 16th March, 10:15am
3/4S:	To be announced
3/4A:	To be announced
5/6T:	TBA for Term 2
Prep B:	TBA for Term 2
1/2FW:	TBA for Term 2
1/2L:	TBA for Term 2

Sacrament Dates, 2023

Confirmation: (Grade 6)

Confirmation Family Workshop Night:
Most Rev. Anthony J. Ireland Visit:
Confirmation:

Thursday 30th March, 7:00pm
Tuesday 2nd May, 9:30am
Saturday 13th May, 5:30pm

First Reconciliation: (Grade 3)

First Reconciliation Reflection Day:
First Reconciliation:
First Reconciliation Assembly:

Tuesday 21st March
Thursday 23rd March, 7pm
Friday 24th March, 2:50pm

First Communion: (Grade 4)

First Communion Family Workshop:
First Communion:

Thursday 27th April, 7pm
Sunday 11th June, 10:30am

Other Important RE Dates for Term One

Event

Date

St Patrick's Feast Day,
students wear full school uniform
with a touch of green.

Thurs 17th March

Ash Wednesday:
Whole School at Parish Mass,
9:15 (day of Fast and Abstinence)

Wed 22nd February

St Patrick's Feast Day,
students wear full school uniform
with a touch of green.

Thurs 17th March

The Passion

Wednesday 5th April,

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Passion Presentation

You are cordially invited to
a re-enactment of The Way of Jesus
Performed by
The Children of St. Gerard's Primary School

Wednesday 5th April, 2023 - 2:00pm
St Gerard's Primary School Hall

The Passion

We would like to invite you to join us in commemorating a significant event in our school's calendar - The Passion. This powerful performance takes place during Holy Week and allows us to journey with Jesus as we remember his last days and moments.

During Holy Week, we experience a range of emotions, from jubilation to anxiety, suffering, humiliation, and abandonment, culminating in Jesus' death on the cross. Through The Passion, we journey with Jesus towards the cross and prepare to welcome him into our presence.

We encourage you to mark your calendars for Wednesday 5th April at 2pm when The Passion will take place in the hall. We understand that some may need to take time off work, but we hope you can arrange to attend this momentous event.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you at The Passion.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Palm leaves needed

If you need to prune any palm trees, please wait until the weekend before The Passion and bring any palm leaves that can be used as props for The Passion to Mrs. Stack on Monday, April 3rd.

Costume for The Passion

We ask that children in Grade Prep – 4 **come to school dressed 'in the times of Jesus'**. Children are required to bring a pair of thongs or sandals as footwear to change into before the event to help make the washing of the feet run more smoothly. All grade 5/6 children wear all black.

We ask that all children bring a gold coin donation on this day to go towards Project Compassion.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Seasons - A Program for Grief and Loss

The Seasons program provides peer support for children facing grief and loss, such as death, separation, or divorce. This useful resource will be accessible in Term 3. If you have any inquiries, please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher or Mrs. Stack.

Project Compassion

Caritas Australia's annual Lenten appeal brings together millions of Australians to combat poverty, advocate for justice, and defend dignity worldwide. During Ash Wednesday Mass, Project Compassion Boxes will be distributed to each class with a designated fundraising goal for Lent. The class that raises the most will be rewarded with a free dress day! The Social Justice Leadership Team will provide regular updates on the progress of each class's fundraising efforts during school assemblies.

Altar Servers

Altar serving practice takes place every Thursday evening at 5:30pm - 6:30pm in St Gerard's Church. To be eligible to serve, servers must have made their First Communion. This is a great opportunity for young members of the Church to get involved in the liturgy and learn the responsibilities of serving at the altar. If anyone has any questions regarding altar serving practice or eligibility, they can contact the parish office at 97924422.



FOUNDATION TEDDY BEARS' TEA PARTY



FOUNDATION TEDDY BEARS' TEA PARTY





Facts from the Be You website

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.



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 the Friday assembly.

The raffle tickets were drawn on the 24th of February and the lucky winners will be announced in next week's newsletter.

WELLBEING



Student Representative Council

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is made up of a group of students who want to help other students by presenting ideas which are of benefit to all students. The SRC also informs its peers of any important information which affects the student body.

On Thursday 2nd March the SRC reps of St Gerard's will attend their first meeting.

The SRC reps will be voted in by their class and announced in next weeks newsletter.



Thursday, 2nd March 2023

Thursday, 2nd March is a Ride to School Day. Students are encouraged to walk or ride to school from home or from a nearby drop off point. If your child doesn't normally walk to school, you could do this together.

Students who ride are given a sticker and the class who has the most students riding or walking get to keep our Ride to School trophy in their classroom for that month.

Students can ride bikes, skateboards or scooters.

They must wear a helmet at all times.

Upon arrival at school, students must hop off their bike or scooter and lock up their bike or scooter in our bike parking area (in front of the Performing Arts Centre).



MULTICULTURAL FOOTY 4 FUN



Experience Australia's most loved sport through AFL Victoria's FREE Footy 4 Fun events delivered across Victoria! A footy experience full of fun activities, modified games & memorable moments to take home with you!

Footy 4 Fun Multicultural is an offering for kids aged 5-12 years from diverse backgrounds that focuses on providing a safe and inclusive introduction to football. While the kids are learning all about the basic skills of the game, the parent will be provided an opportunity to understand the game of Australia Rules Football.

WHERE:

St Gerard's Primary School

WHEN:

February 22nd - March 8th
Wednesdays, 3:45 pm - 4:45 pm



REGISTER HERE!

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 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

9354 8345 or email angie@agsprints.com.au

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's background and their outcomes.

CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is:

- \$125 for primary school students
- \$225 for secondary school students

HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from the website below.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments;** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances;** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about CSEF visit:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/csef.aspx>



FINANCE



CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF) APPLICATION FORM

School Name

School REF ID

Parent/carer details

Surname

First name

Address

Town/suburb State Postcode

Contact number

Centrelink pensioner concession OR Health care card number (CRN)

- - - OR

☐ Foster parent under a temporary care order* OR ☐ Veterans affairs pensioner (Gold Card)**

*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

**Applicants must provide a copy of the Veteran Affairs Gold card

Is this an application for special consideration (no CRN needed)? Yes ☐ No ☐

Student details

Student's surname	Student's first name	Student ID	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Year level
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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I authorise the Department of Education and Training (DET) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry of my Centrelink customer details and concession card status in order to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Australian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to provide the results of that enquiry to DET.

I understand that:

- DFFH will use information I have provided to DET to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DET personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.
- this consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.
- I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DFFH and provide it to DET so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.
- If I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DET.
- Information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to the DFFH and/or State Schools Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You are able to request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child's school.

Signature of applicant Date / /



CSEF ELIGIBILITY

Below are the criteria used to determine a student's eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

Criteria 1 – General eligibility

To be eligible for the fund, a parent or carer of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one
 - on the first day of Term two
- a) be a holder of one or more of the eligible financially-means tested cards OR be a temporary foster parent, and;
- b) submit an application to the school by the due date.

For the list of eligible financially-means tested cards refer to the CSEF Policy:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/policy>

Parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with the above.

Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. CSEF is not payable to students attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooled, or TAFE.

Special Consideration

A special consideration category exists for

- Families on a bridging visa, temporary protection visa, in community detention or are asylum seeker families
- Students in temporary out of home care arrangements, including statutory kinship care

For more information, see <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/guidance/eligibility>

Eligibility Date

For concession card holders CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/carer concession card being validated successfully with Centrelink on the first day of either term one (30 January 2023) or term two (24 April 2023).

PAYMENT AMOUNTS

CSEF payment amount

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

- Primary school student rate: \$125 per year.
- Secondary school student rate: \$225 per year.

The CSEF is paid directly to your child's school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth. For more information, see:

www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/csef.aspx

Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Secondary schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents/carers so please register your interest at the school.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM

NOTE: ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

1. Complete the PARENT/CARER DETAILS section.

Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.

If you are claiming as a temporary Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.

If you are seeking special consideration, mark this in the form and provide a copy of the relevant documentation.

2. Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.

3. Sign and date the form and return it to the school office as soon as possible. The CSEF program for 2023 closes on the 23 June 2023.

IMPORTANT DATES

March

2nd March:	3/4S Class Mass, 10:15
3rd March:	St Gerard's Athletics Day at Knox Athletics Track
9th March:	3/4A Class Mass, 10:15
13th March:	Labour Day Public Holiday
21st March:	First Reconciliation Reflection Day
16th March:	5/6O Class Mass, 10:15
17th March:	St Patrick's Day
21st March:	P, ½ Family Literacy Workshop, 7pm
23rd March:	First Reconciliation 7pm
24th March:	National Ride to School Day
24th March:	Harmony Day Whole School Celebration
15-27 March:	NAPLAN Testing period - Year 3 and Year 5
24th March:	First Reconciliation Assembly
30th March:	Confirmation Family Workshop
30th March:	5/6O Reconciliation

April:

2nd April:	Daylight Savings Ends
5th April:	Subway Lunch
5th April:	The Passion
6th April:	Last day of Term 1, 3.30pm finish

Happy BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday to all who had celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays this week

- | | | |
|---|-------------|------|
| • | Isaiah | Yr 6 |
| • | Kavya | Yr 5 |
| • | Catherine V | Yr 6 |
| • | Joram | Yr 2 |



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

- Nazareth College Open Evening
- Endeavour Hills Eagles Junior Football Club (AFL)
- Springvale Indoor Sports
- St John's College Open Evening
- Mazenod Secondary College Open Day
- Noble Park Junior football Club (AFL)
- Netball Dandenong
- Ukraine Support Fund
- Swimland Swim Club

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 \$6 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.