



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



ST GERARD'S SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Term 1, Week 6

07 March 2025



Prayer for Ash Wednesday

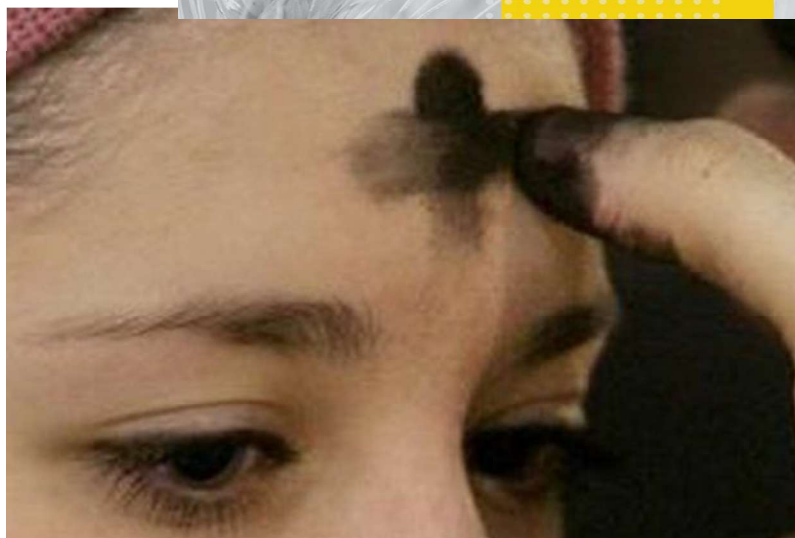
Create in me a clean heart,
O God; and put a new
spirit within me.

- Psalm 51:10

Come
TO ME
all you who labor and are heavily burdened,
and I will
Give You
REST

MATTHEW 11:28

Lord, thank You for
the work that You
have given us to
do. Help us to be
diligent and work
whole heartily for
You. Bless the
work of our hands
and help us to find
rest in You. Amen



@st.gerards3175

Principal - Mr Paul Cowan
principal@sgdandenongn.th.catholic.edu.au
71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



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

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

This week marks the start of our Church Season of Lent.

On Tuesday there was a distinct smell of Pancakes throughout the school as classes engaged in **Shrove (Pancake) Tuesday**. In addition to pancakes we **also had the first of our Subway Lunch Days** for the year.

As a school we **attended the parish Ash Wednesday mass**. Lent 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 and for our children to experience and celebrate with the wider faith community.

We also had the second of our **Open Days on Wednesday**. These days are an opportunity for prospective families to see all that we offer here at St Gerard's. We have **one more Open Day for Term 1 next Thursday 13 March**. If you know families who will be looking for a school in 2026, we would appreciate you letting them know. Similarly, **if you have a child who will be starting school in 2026 please let us know so that we can ensure a place for them as existing families are our first category of our enrolments**.

The third of our 5 **AUSKICK sessions** occurred yesterday afternoon with close to 50 children participating. At the end of the session a flyer with information about one of the local AFL clubs North Dandenong MASALA was given out. This flyer is also contained in this newsletter and is on our Community Notice Boards. If your child is interested in playing AFL it might be worth investigating what this club has to offer.

As I mentioned last week, an aspect of our end of day dismissal is to be mindful that there are **designated pick up areas for our students and pedestrian pathways**. It is busy at the end of the day and we **need families walking home or to their cars to use the pedestrian pathways. To walk in front of the cars in the 'pick up' area can be very dangerous**. Our aim is to get all our children and families home safely. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

In other traffic reminders, it has been brought to my attention that **when turning RIGHT out of the Car Park** there have been several cars that have gone through a red light at the crossing. I am asking all families to be mindful of this as it is a busy time of the day with plenty of cars and pedestrians making their way home. We all have a responsibility to look after each other and keep each other safe.

Finally, a reminder that **next Monday 10 March is the Labour Day Public Holiday and there is no school**.

Have a great long weekend and God bless.

Paul Cowan
PRINCIPAL

Religious News

Key Dates

Class/Level Mass

3/4W: Thursday 20th March, Class Mass at 10:00am

Reconciliation

Year 4S & 4WL: Thursday, 13th March at 10:15

Years 5/6O & 5/6T: Thursday, 27th March at 10:15am

Other Important Dates for Religion

17th March:	Wear a Touch of Green with school uniform for St Patrick's Day
TBA:	Delegation of Yr 6 leaders attend St. Patrick's Day Mass at Cathedral
31st March onwards:	<i>The Passion Gallery Walk</i> for student and family participation
4th April:	Parishioners and Family invited to attend <i>The Passion Gallery Walk</i> after Mass
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 will be 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.

Ash Wednesday



Joel 2:12–18 | Ps 50:3–6. 12–14. 17. R. v.3 | 2 Corinthians 5:20–6:2 | Matthew 6:1–6. 16–18

There is a great story about G K Chesterton, the famous writer who died in 1936. Among many things, he was the creator of Fr Brown, the detective who uses powers of empathy to understand people better than the police. He was once asked to contribute an essay to a collection on the theme of 'What is Wrong with the World?' His response to the question required only two words. 'I am,' he wrote.

Ash Wednesday, which celebrates the start of Lent, calls us to a more courageous engagement with reality. That is why, when we receive ashes, we often hear the words 'remember you are dust and to dust you will return.' That is our truth. It is easy to look at the state of the world and descend into blame and indignation.

Sure, there are many things that are desperately troubling. Wars, poverty and environmental degradation are part of a long list. But who among us has the courage to own up and respond to the question, 'what's wrong with the world,' by answering 'I am.'

Don't misunderstand. We are mostly good people, doing our best to love and serve each other. But we would sell ourselves short if we left the future of Earth to others who we thought were more to blame. Ash Wednesday asks us to look at the world and our part in it. Every year, we begin our journey to Easter with Jesus's advice to go into our private room, wherever that may be, and encounter the Lord one on one. Christianity, unlike so much else in the world, has little time for self-marketing.

Ash Wednesday is Day One of our Lenten journey. God's invitation to 'come back to me with all your heart' is also an invitation to leave our private room and step into a world in urgent need of our love and honesty. This year, Project Compassion is calling us to *Unite Against Poverty*. St Paul says, 'now is the favourable time.' We can make the most difference when we are most truly ourselves.



Prayer

We pray this Lent for a deeper trust in God's plan. May our commitment to prayer, fasting and almsgiving, awaken within us a hunger for justice and compassion. May the Jubilee year remind us of our need for a fresh start. May our work for Project Compassion help us to *Unite Against Poverty*.
Amen

Photo: Toefuata'iga (13) smiles as she reads a dictionary in a Samoan primary school. Credit: Caritas Australia.

projectcompassion.org.au

Religious News

An Invitation to Bring Mary Home

An Invitation to Bring Mary Home: A Week of Family Spiritual Connection

We extend an invitation to families to bring the Our Lady statue into their homes for a week, enhancing their family prayer experience. A brochure containing instructions for engaging in rosary prayer, along with sets of rosary beads, will be provided. If you are interested in taking the Our Lady statue home, please let Mrs. O'Brien know.



This Friday at Assembly, the Statue of Our Lady is going home with the **Chilton** Family.

Please remember if you are interested to take Mother Mary home to fill in a form and hand it over to your classroom teacher.

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.



The Passion Gallery Walk

We're excited to invite families to experience *The Passion Gallery Walk* starting March 31st. Each class will contribute two artworks inspired by their assigned Stations of the Cross, reflecting on The Passion.

Details:

When: From March 31st
Where: PAC - The Passion Gallery Walk

Join us for this reflective journey as we share this meaningful time together. Stay tuned for more details!

Easter Gallery Walk

Families are invited to follow up on *The Passion Gallery Walk* by viewing the Resurrection artwork, which will be displayed after Easter.

Reading Before School

Reading Before School has started full steam ahead. We had a very good turn out with parents and students reading to each other this week. Children receive a raffle ticket and go into a draw to win a prize. Students are encouraged to attend and read a book by themselves, to each other or with their families.



Reading Before school



Reading Before School



Wellbeing

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.



St Gerard's Celebrates Harmony Day

This year, St Gerard's will celebrate Harmony Day on **Friday, 28th March**, a special day to honor the diverse cultures within our school community.

The day will begin with a Paraliturgy and a Harmony Day Parade, followed by fun activities that help students learn about different cultures.

We invite parents and family members to get involved! If you'd like to share your culture and assist with activities, please speak to Mrs. Fernandez.

Let's come together to celebrate unity and diversity at St Gerard's!

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. Hailey**
- 2. Leo**
- 3. Sofiya**
- 4. Harold**
- 5. Rosana**
- 6. Ameya**

These students will be rewarded with a special surprise with Mr Cowan.



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 6th March the Semester One SRC reps of St Gerard's attended their first meeting. They discussed the role of an SRC member and upcoming events including Harmony Day. The next SRC meeting will be held on Thursday 13th of March.

A big congratulation to the following students who were voted in by their class members to be the SRC reps for Semester One 2025.

Foundation B- Thinuki and Chidiogo

1/2S- Ryan and Sanaya

1/2FB- Ansel and Ameya

3/4W- Grace and Christian

3/4SG- Maleah and Abel

5/6O- Alfie and Shaun

5/6O- Oscar and Chudier

Wellbeing

Give Me 5 News

Next week our Give Me 5 whole school focus is to Be Cooperative in the playground. You can do this by following directions, moving safely, playing fairly and sharing and using equipment safely. Students who are being cooperative in the playground will be rewarded with a silver band.

St. Gerard's Give Me 5 Whole School Matrix



Principle	Learning Areas	Corridors	Toilets	Playground/Sandpit
Be Respectful	Speak appropriately and use manners Care for property Take turns Whole body listening Greet people by name	Speak appropriately and use manners Care for property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the area neat and tidy 	Speak appropriately and use manners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give other users their privacy Care for property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep toilets tidy and flush Wash hands	Speak appropriately and use manners Care for property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place rubbish in the bin Keep sand in the sandpit and bark in the garden Include others Respect everyone's views and space
Be Co-operative	Follow Directions Move safely Stay on task Share with others and help each other	Follow Directions Move safely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the left hand side of the corridor to exit and the left hand side to enter 	Follow Directions Move safely Wait for your partner	Follow Directions Move safely Play fairly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept rules Take turns Share and use equipment safely
Be Your Best	Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Ask for help	Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Only enter the area with permission	Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Report problems to a teacher	Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Try to solve your problems
Be Positive	Never give up			Encourage others
Be Spirit Filled	Treat others as you would like to be treated. Pray daily and during meditation	Treat others as you would like to be treated.	Treat others as you would like to be treated.	Treat others as you would like to be treated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say sorry and forgive others Be kind

AUSKICK

St Gerard's AUSKICK 2025

St Gerard's is once again offering an exclusive AUSKICK (AFL) program for all students after school on Thursday afternoons from 3.30pm – 4.30pm on our school grounds.

This has proved to be a very popular program in the past and I am sure it will be again.

This will be a 5-week program starting on Thursday 20 February and continuing each Thursday until Thursday 20 March.

An online registration form is below and will need to be completed prior to the first session.

School staff will supervise the children from 3.30pm and children that attend OSHC will be escorted back to the room after the sessions.

If you have any questions, please contact myself via Seesaw or email

principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

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.



come find your awesome

ST GERARDS PS AUSKICK CENTRE

5 weeks for only \$25!

Use 30E4BB37 to redeem the discounted price!

Begins 3:30pm, Thursday 20th of February 2025

at St Gerards Primary School - Oval

Scan the QR code to register!



Important Dates / Info

March

- **10th Labour Day Public Holiday**
- 13th Year 3 Reconciliation Reflection Day
- 12th - 24th NAPLAN Testing (Years 3 and 5)
- 12th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 13th Year 4 Reconciliation
- 13th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 4, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 19th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 19th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th Year 3/4 W Class Mass
- 20th Year 3 Reconciliation Celebration 6.30pm
- 21st Reconciliation Assembly 2.50pm
- 20th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 5 (FINAL), 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 21st National Ride to School Day
- 26th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 27th Year 5/6 Reconciliation
- 31st *The Passion Gallery Walk* starts

April

- 1st Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 2nd - 4th Year 5/6 Camp - CYC The Island
- 4th *The Passion Gallery Walk* finishes
- **4th End of Term 1, school finishes at 3.30pm**



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!



St John's

OPEN DAY
SATURDAY 22 MARCH 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

At St John's, we nurture students academically, spiritually, and empower them to lead with confidence, serve with compassion, and succeed in an ever-changing world.

- Faith-Based Curriculum
- Academic Excellence & Innovation
- Thriving Arts & Sports Programs
- Supportive Community

Explore our facilities, and discover how our students are empowered for life beyond school.



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.

St Gerard's YLVOSHC

Program Information

Service Phone Number: 0402 192 685



OPERATING TIMES

Before School Care

Hours:

6:45am - 8:45am

After School Care

Hours:

3:30pm - 6:30pm

Pupil Free Days:

7:00am - 6:00pm

Vacation Care:

7:00am - 6:00pm

Prices

Before School Care

(Permanent) \$15.00

(Casual) \$20.00

After Max CCS: \$2.89

After School Care

(Permanent) \$20.00

(Casual) \$25.00

After Max CCS: \$3.16

Pupil Free Day and Vacation Care

(Permanent) \$65.00

(Casual): \$72.50

After Max CCS: \$6.50



* MAX CCS REBATE FIGURES ARE PROVIDED AS APPROXIMATES AND MAY VARY

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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

Congratulations

Congratulations to Gi'on's Family on the Arrival of Baby Nathaniel!

A big congratulations to Gi'on and family on the arrival of their beautiful baby boy, Nathaniel Wachira! We wish them all the best and may Nathaniel's life be filled with love and happiness!



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

9354 8345 or email angie@agsprints.com.au



A reminder to families that arrive before 3.25pm to park in the carpark.

Joining the drop off/ pick up line, particularly near the pedestrian crossing, creates a backlog of cars and prevents families from parking in the car park, which causes issues. Another aspect of this is to be mindful of our procedures at the end of the school day. There are designated pick up areas for our students and pedestrian pathways. It can be busy at the end of the day, especially when it is cold and raining, however we need families walking home or to their cars to use the pedestrian pathways. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Notice Board



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

- **Sanaya** Yr 2
- **Hailey** Yr 5
- **Tianna** Yr 2



- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- AFL Auskick - St Gerard's 5 Week Program
- 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



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.