



St Agnes Catholic High School

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email: stagnes@parra.catholic.edu.au

to truth through love

SCHOOL WEBSITE: www.stagnesrootyhill.catholic.edu.au

Follow us on FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM: StAgnesRootyHill

Diary Dates

27 February

Photo Day

2 March

Staff Development Day

5-9 March

Catholic Schools Week

5 March

Yr 7/2019 Information
Night Tours start 5.30pm

14 March

PASS Surf School A line

19 March

Cross Country

21 March

PASS Surf School B line

21-23 March

Year 7 Camp

28 March

Easter Show Excursion

29 March

Stations of the Cross

30 March

Good Friday/ Walk

2 April

Easter Monday

23 February 2018

Ash Wednesday (February 14) marked the beginning of the journey of Lent. Lent is a time when we are invited to stop and reflect; a time to turn back to God and God's call to be people of justice, humility, compassion and mercy.

Indifference to our neighbour and to God ... represents a real temptation for Christians. 'Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience' (Pope Francis. 2015 Lenten message). 'What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God' (Micah 6:8). The voice of the prophets is clear. During Lent we are challenged to care for others through giving our time and resources to help those less fortunate (almsgiving), to prayer and fasting and to actions for justice.

The students of St Agnes Catholic High School have accepted this challenge - through prayer, giving to Caritas and raising awareness of injustice they are growing in faith and love.

Reflection

It is often said that we should give up something for Lent. The prophets call on all of us to let our consciences be troubled by the poverty, injustice and violence of our world and to act - to do something extra...however small.

Whatever we decide to 'do' or 'give up' for Lent, the important thing is that in six weeks time we have grown in our relationship with Jesus as individuals and as a faith community.

We Pray

This Lent may our hearts open to the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth. May we respond with compassion and generosity to those we meet. May we be hearts of mercy and compassion in our world.

Staff Development Day - March 2

Next Friday is a pupil free day. Staff will be working with Dr Lyn Sharratt from the University of Ontario focussing on assessment practices and feedback to students. We are delighted that we have been able to access such an acclaimed educational consultant to further develop and grow as teachers.

Year 7/2019 Open Day

Our Year 7/2019 Open Day is fast approaching. I encourage prospective and existing families to come along to support St Agnes Catholic High School on **Monday 5 March** from 5:30-7:30pm. Enrolments are now being accepted for 2019.

Pace e Bene
Lisa-Maree Browning
Principal

*St Agnes
Catholic High School
Evans Road
Rooty Hill
Ph: 02 8882 0700
Fax: 02 8882 0790*

*St Clare's
Catholic High School
175 Buckwell Drive
Hassall Grove
Ph: 02 9835 2466
Fax: 02 9835 2539*

*Loyola Senior
High School
91 North Parade
Mt Druitt
Ph: 02 9832 4455
Fax: 02 9832 1839*

From the Assistant Principal

Ok you have done it! Your children are back at school. You have had to find lunchboxes, schoolbags, notebooks, pencils, and pens. If they've grown a bit over the summer, a new uniform, along with the must-have joggers of the season, also might be in order. You might need to find room in your budget for an ipad, hotspots, and USB flash drives.

Then there are other back-to-school items. Those that don't make the usual shopping lists but that are much more important for your children than any multi-subject notebook, scientific calculator, or smart pen. Unlike the lists you normally receive from school, my list is made up of things you already have and that are grounded in scientific research for improving children's learning.

Here are 2 of them:

1. Praise Children For Their Effort, Not Their Intelligence

Most of us parents praise our children for being smart. We do it constantly. We do it because our children are bright and we think that telling them so makes them feel good and gives them confidence. We do it when we say, "You're so smart," and when we boast about their brain power to their grandparents.

This is a good thing isn't it? No. Telling children they're smart does not give them the confidence to take on new challenges or the self-esteem to persevere when they fail. Research suggests that telling children they're smart might actually interfere with their ability to learn.

"What?" you're thinking. It's because repeated praise for being intelligent sends the message that intelligence is an innate and fixed trait. This leads children to discount the importance of effort. They reason, "I'm smart, so I don't need to try as hard" Children who are praised for their intelligence also become less likely to take intellectual risks and are more likely to give up when the going gets tough. It is more important for them to appear smart than to chance making mistakes and getting labeled as "dumb."

Praising children for their intelligence also stymies their ability to deal with failure. When children labeled as "smart" fail, they reason they've failed because they mustn't have the intellectual goods to cut it. In fact, some studies show that when "smart" children struggle, they are more likely to lie about their performance than to admit that they had trouble. Too much praise can be especially troubling for children who have had an easy time in the early grades but then run into subjects in high school that require some effort. When they begin to make errors, they don't try harder or study more diligently because they believe that talent alone and not effort creates success. So they conclude that they must have been unintelligent all along. It's at this point that many "smart" children throw in the academic towel.

In contrast to children who are praised for being smart, children who are encouraged for their effort come to believe that intelligence is a flexible quality that can be improved through hard work. These children feel that their success is in their control and therefore they are not stopped by failure. They interpret failure merely as a signal to try harder or do things differently. In fact, children who are encouraged for their effort often are game to take on demanding tasks and work to develop new strategies. In short, these children tend to go at challenges eagerly, persevere when the going gets tough, and show resilience after failure.

A few comments here and there aren't likely to do any lasting damage, but the key is to praise children for their effort, their hard work, their persistence, and their strategies. Next time your son comes home with an A, instead of telling him how smart he is, praise him for trying hard. If he comes home with a lower grade than expected, be honest. Don't tell him that he deserved a better grade because he is smart. Instead, encourage him to think through ways that he could improve.

2. Make Learning Meaningful, Not Rewarded

If you've ever promised your child a treat, some TV time, or another reward for finishing her word study homework, working on her science project, or writing her essay, then you know that bribes can get things done. What you might not know is that they also squash children's drive to learn.

Children are born with a deep desire to learn. In fact, children's drive to learn is so strong

that some consider it a universal human drive, like hunger and thirst. You can see this drive most clearly in infants and young children who are constantly observing, exploring, experimenting, and asking questions. They engage in these behaviours for the same reason we indulge in chocolate cake. It feels good. In psychology speak: learning is internally motivated. The “learners high” that children get from making new discoveries, learning new things, and mastering new skills spurs them to do more exploring, experimenting, and questioning so that they can learn even more things and get rewarded with even more good feelings.

As children’s knowledge and abilities become increasingly sophisticated with age, their learning brings them not only joy but also mastery. Mastery gives them the capacity to do new things and take certain risks with their know-how. Learning is a straight up reward cycle that if allowed to thrive, will persist for a lifetime. But it is possible to break this natural cycle by doing something as seemingly harmless as doling out rewards for children’s learning.

Can gold star stickers really undermine children’s learning?” you’re thinking. Yes. Decades of behavioural research has demonstrated that rewarding any behaviour that is internally motivated with external incentives reduces our natural drive to carry out that behaviour. The reasoning goes that when an intrinsically rewarding behaviour is reinforced with external incentives, like prizes, cash, or cupcakes, we begin paying more attention to the incentives and less attention to the pleasure that comes from doing the behaviour. This shift in attention brings about a shift in motivation to extrinsic incentives and disables the existing intrinsic motivation. When children are rewarded for doing something they enjoy, like learning, the reward alters their source of motivation from internal to external and they come to expect rewards for learning.

It is true that children will do more math homework and word study worksheets if we promise them chocolate, a superhero action figure, or videogame time. But in the process of repeatedly rewarding them for doing their work, they go from learning because it feels good to learning to get a special privilege or prize. Then the goodies, rather than any internal drive, come to motivate learning. Even enjoyable learning tasks can be turned into drudgery that children will do only for external incentives. Rewards for even play activities, like drawing and block building, can snuff out the fun.

But as a parent, boring projects or seemingly lame homework is not an excuse to offer up rewards. Rather it is our job to get our children to realize the real-world benefits of the skills these assignments are developing. The thing is, the motivation to learn doesn’t come from the process of learning. It comes from products of learning. And sometimes these products are difficult for children to see without our help.

The motivation to read, for instance, doesn’t come from the thrill of sounding out new words, writing out their definitions, and then generating a list of synonyms. The motivation for reading comes from being able to do meaningful things, like reading comic books and secret notes from your best friend.

So what can you do? Make sure that your children understand the real-world benefits of the skills they’re developing. Think of it this way. It is surely tough for a first-grader to understand why he’s being asked to memorize how to spell a set strange words, write them four times each, and then sort them into alphabetical order. But if his parents regularly read storybooks, street signs, cake recipes, and restaurant menus with him, then he’s likely to understand not only why his teacher is asking him to learn new words but also that reading can be good fun. Likewise, the motivation for learning math is not the excitement of rounding up whole numbers, estimating whether $8 + 9$ is more than 20, determining the volume of containers, and finding the perimeter of a pentagon. It is driven by the real-world benefits of being able to figure out whether you have enough birthday money to buy both the cubby house and the family minivan, divide your jellybeans equally among your friends, know if your new water gun is too big to fit under your bed, and estimate how many bags of sand you’ll need to fill the new sandbox.

If you can help your children understand these sorts of real-world benefits of their new knowledge, then you’ve motivated their learning.

Ken Wolfe

SCHOOL FEES

We would like to make parents/caregivers aware that the incorrect biller code has been printed on the Term 1 School Fees Statements. For any parents/caregivers making future BPay payments, **please use biller code 514695** (not the one on the statement).

For those who have already made a payment to the incorrect biller code , please advise our School Fees Secretary to ensure funds are receipted correctly (call 8882 0706).

Parents have the opportunity to take up the FLEXIBLE PAYMENT PLAN offer online. Forms have been mailed to you direct but **MUST** be returned for processing by 9th March 2018.

Should parents not return these forms by the due date, the family may receive a reminder notice.

From the Teaching & Learning Coordinator: Curriculum

Years 7-10 Assessment Handbooks are now available on the school website. They have also been placed on the school Moodle. These handbooks are designed to give students information about formal assessment procedures. Dates have been provided for all relevant assessments. Some assessment dates may be changed with sufficient notification of two weeks given to students due to changes in the school calendar.

Assessment is used to find out what a student needs to learn, how well a student is doing as a course progresses and how well a student did at the end of a unit. Assessment can be formal or informal. An example of informal assessment would be a teacher's judgement of the work completed in class or participation in a particular activity. Formal assessment can include tasks such as assignments, exams, research projects, performances, portfolios and practical tests. Formal assessment tasks include information on the outcomes that are being assessed and an indication of what students have to do to achieve a given grade.

I have included an extract from the Assessment Handbooks regarding student responsibilities. It is important that all students familiarise themselves with them. These are as follows:

- Speak with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator if you are in doubt about the requirements of the Assessment Policy.
- Cooperate with the process of Assessment.
- Inform the school if you are to be absent on the day of an assessment task.
- Do not plagiarise (i.e. copy) other peoples' work. Malpractice or dishonesty will lead to a zero mark.
- Ensure that any questions about marks, grades or comments awarded for an individual piece of work are resolved at the time the work is handed back.
- Demonstrate that thorough effort and achievement have been met for the requirements of that course.
- Complete all assigned work to the best of your ability.
- Complete the task on the set date that it is due. Penalties will apply for late submissions.

Students also have access to the Google school assessment calendar that outlines, on a term basis, all assessment dates. Students should familiarise themselves with these dates and make use of Homework Club that takes place every Tuesday afternoon between 2:30-3:30pm in the library to receive assistance from teachers in the completion of their tasks.

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE HSC MINIMUM STANDARD

From this year, Year 9 NAPLAN tests will no longer be available as an early way for students to demonstrate the standard. This change has been made to ensure NAPLAN remains focussed on its diagnostic purpose and to reduce unnecessary stress on young people.

Current Year 10 students who achieved a Band 8 or above in one or more of the 2017 Year 9 NAPLAN reading, writing or numeracy tests are recognised as having met the HSC minimum standard in that area/s and will not need to sit the corresponding online test/s.

For further information regarding the HSC minimum standard of Literacy and Numeracy please visit <http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-minimum-standard>.

Laurence De Martin

YEAR 7/2019 INFORMATION NIGHT

Monday 5 March 2018

Tours: 5.30pm & Information Session:
6.30pm

Register your interest at
<https://www.trybooking.com/TZEZ>

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From the Religious Education Coordinator

Our Lenten Journey theme:

"Return to me with your whole heart" (Joel 2:12)

This year the Australian Bishops have identified 2018 as the National Year of Youth. A year where we carefully discern how we as young people can be a life giving presence for our church and our society. Life can get very busy, but with the wisdom and tradition of the church, we have been given 40 days for prayer, fasting and almsgiving, a time to focus on our faith and to strive to be holy. As a community, this is an opportunity to refocus our gaze on Jesus this Lenten season.

In the library, Mrs Berman and Miss Brogan have created a special place where students can stop and write a commitment this Lent. Lent is a special time when we stop and think about how we can play our part in God's hope for a world that is fair, just and peaceful. We think about our relationship with God, and how serving others draws us closer to God. We also think about the changes we can make in our lives, to be God's love and mercy in our world, ensuring all people have a just future. To help us align our hearts to the meaning of Lent, Fr Alan Layt or Fr Pat Mullins SJ continue to support us by making Confessions available every Friday in the Prayer room that is open to all staff and students.



Our Lenten journey began with **Shrove Tuesday** as the Catholic Social Leaders hosted a fundraiser for Project Compassion by selling pancakes at recess. I'd like to give a big thank you to Mrs Balzan for her delicious St Agnes original pancake recipe and to her lovely cooks - *Rhiannon Soans (10.7)*, *Jeremy Parnell (10.6)*, *Crystal-Rose Marsh (10.5)*, *Bryan Gamo (10.3)*, *Caitlin Adema (10.1)*, *Kiara White (10.8)* and *Isobel McDonald (10.5)* for their assistance. Our fundraiser was a true success and display of St. Agnes spirit.

The following day, Stage 4 and 5 held an **Ash Wednesday Liturgy** where we all had the opportunity to make a commitment to action, that we may open our hearts to Project Compassion, and live deeply the theme '**For a Just Future**'. During the distribution of ashes, the song "Hosea" was sung beautifully by Kathleen Sikuea (10.7) and piano played by Robert Apostol (9.1) and this song reminded us of the spirit of Lent; coming back to Christ who longs for our return back to him:

***"Come back to me with all your heart
Don't let fear keep us apart
Trees do bend though straight and tall
So must we to others' call***

***Long have I waited for
Your coming home to me
And living deeply our new lives***

***The wilderness will lead you
To the place where I will speak
Integrity and justice
With tenderness
You shall know."***



As we have been marked on the forehead by ashes, a symbol of the beginning of Lent but also a symbol of our humanity and our need for repentance and forgiveness, may we take some time with ourselves and with our families to think of small ways each day to help us honour the meaning of Lent. I have found a Lenten Family Calendar from Loyola Press (<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/lent/activities-and-resources/lenten-family-calendar>) that you can download and make as a part of your Lenten journey this year.



I also want to share with you this year's Lenten message from Pope Francis as he helps us to open our eyes to the true meaning of this season of repentance through prayer, almsgiving and fasting:

- **Prayer** enables our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception, and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well.
- **Almsgiving** sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbour as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. I would also hope that, even in our daily encounters with those who beg for our assistance, we would see such requests as coming from God himself. If through me God helps someone today, will he not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more generous than God.
- **Fasting** weakens our tendency to violence; it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God. Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbour. It revives our desire to obey God, who alone is capable of satisfying our hunger.

(Source: MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR LENT 2018

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/lent/documents/papa-francesco_20171101_messaggio-quaresima2018.html)

The Breakfast Club have responded to the call for almsgiving by continuing to support students in providing toast, fruit and cereals every Tuesday to Friday morning from 7:40 to 8:10am. The Year 10 leaders have volunteered their time to serving students with a smile on their face and with a generous spirit. When asked "Why do you serve in the Breakfast Club?", Rasha Ali (10.1) responded "**It's fun! and I really enjoy doing this. It gives me more purpose in coming to school every day**". Simple acts of kindness like this is what makes St. Agnes a place where all are welcome and valued as a member of our school community. I'd like to personally thank all the students who have dedicated their early morning's to continue the work of Breakfast Club this year. We are always looking for volunteers so I encourage students from Year 7, 8 and 9 to sign up and be a part of this wonderful St Agnes original initiative.



Project Compassion Challenge: Which House is the GOATest?

As a school community, we are doing our part in bringing awareness of the wonderful work of Caritas Australia through the GOAT Challenge. Each House (Chisholm, Francis, MacKillop and Xavier) is represented as a village, whose aim is to buy as many goats as they can. Goats can provide a constant supply of income and nutritious food for a family through their quality milk, cheese and meat. One goat costs \$50, so for every \$50 earned by each House more goats will be raised for the House village. We encourage all of our staff and students to generously support our Project Compassion challenge this year as we know a small donation each week goes a long way. An update of the progress of each House will be shared every week via our school newsletter, instagram or facebook page. Follow us to see which House is the GOATest!

I pray that we may all have a reflective and prayerful Lenten journey this year.

*Pace e bene,
Mrs Mary Reyes*



**CHRIST
CATHOLIC
COLLEGE
COMMUNITY
OF SCHOOL**

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Evans Road
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**St Clare's
Catholic High School**
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Hassall Grove
Ph: 02 9835 2466
Fax: 02 9835 2539

**Loyola Senior
High School**
91 North Parade
Mt Druitt
Ph: 02 9832 4455
Fax: 02 9832 1839

*a diverse
community
learning
together*

From the Catholic Education Office

National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence 16th March, 2018

Registrations are now open for the 2018 National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence (NDA) to be held Friday 16 March 2018.

This annual positive day of action provides a national focus for school communities to talk about the importance of 'taking a stand' against bullying and violence. Each official NDA school will have access to a range of downloadable resources and materials to make the day your own, including parent and student tips, lesson plans, classroom discussion starters to encourage students to say 'Bullying. No Way!'.

Join the movement now and register for the NDA. All Australian schools are invited to register as an official NDA school and start planning early! [The Bullying. No Way!](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au) website offers schools a range of resources, materials, lesson plans and classroom discussion starters to support NDA activities. For more information and to register visit www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

Vegetable Week and The Big Vegie Crunch 2018 for Primary Schools

Vegetable Week, featuring The Big Vegie Crunch, is back for 2018. Vegetable Week will run over Week 5 of Term 1 - from Monday 26 February to Friday 2 March 2018 - with The Big Vegie Crunch being held at 10am on Thursday 1 March.

Vegetable Week is a quick, easy and FREE school-based event that aims to increase students' knowledge, exposure and positive attitudes towards vegetables. The Big Vegie Crunch is the exciting record breaking focus of Vegetable Week. It is an attempt to get as many NSW primary school students crunching vegetables together as possible. Last year 29,067 NSW primary school students crunched simultaneously. Help us to break this record in 2018! For more details on the event, and to register, take a look at the Vegetable Week and The Big Vegie Crunch webpage - www.healthy-kids.com.au

PRC 2018 Calendar of Events

A copy of the calendar can be downloaded via [2018 Calendar of Events](#) for the Parents Representative Council (PRC). All parents and friends are welcome to attend.

From the Bishops Office

2018 Lenten Message from Bishop Vincent

To read Bishop Vincent's Lenten Message in full and watch the video, please visit: goo.gl/2F77m9

Pre-marriage preparation courses

The Life, Marriage and Family Office are again offering Pre-Marriage preparation courses for couples intending to marry. Couples are invited to book online to attend either a weekend course or individual couple preparation. The website for online booking is www.parracatholic.org/pmp. The dates for all courses in 2018 will be found online. Further enquiries: 02 8838 3460.

Walk the Lenten Journey on your mobile phone

The Xt3 Lent Calendar App 2018 is available for download on Apple and Android devices (search for Xt3 Lent) and can be viewed from the website: www.xt3.com/lent

The Lent calendar will run from Ash Wednesday to Divine Mercy Sunday. Each day will unlock a new video, meditation or podcast, to help you prayerfully journey through Lent. The theme for the Xt3 Lent Calendar 2018 is "Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus."

Volunteers Needed

Kimberley Catholic Volunteer Service in the Diocese of Broome, WA, requires volunteers to assist with the work of the local Church in the Kimberley. There are various important voluntary tasks: administration, building maintenance, gardening, shop staffing, cooking, cleaning etc. Placements are preferred for a period of 6 months. We are currently seeking caretakers for the Balgo parish. Accommodation and food is provided. For further details on how to be a part of this unique experience, and an application form, please contact: Volunteer Coordinator: Anneliese Rohr 08 9192 1060. Email: volunteers@broome-diocese.org

**OUR
PARISH
SCHOOLS**

St Aidan's
9 Adelaide Street
Rooty Hill
Ph: 02 9625 8404

Sacred Heart
23 Nelson Street
Mt Druitt South
Ph: 02 9625 8847

Holy Family
254 Luxford Road
Emerton
Ph: 02 9628 7272

St John Vianney's
17 Cameron Street
Doonside
Ph: 02 9622 3426

Swimming Carnival - 23 February 2018



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PLAYER REGISTRATION DAYS
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DATE 10TH & 17TH OF FEBRUARY 2018

TIME 4PM- 6PM

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SONIA MCWHIRTER REGISTRAR
0425213080

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