From the Principal

The Advent Wreath

One of the major symbols of the Advent season is the wreath. This Sunday is the 1st Sunday in Advent. The encircling wreath is symbolic of God without beginning or end and the green foliage represents our hope in God. There are usually five candles in the wreath, a central white candle representing the light of Christ that came into the world and then four outside candles that are usually purple and rose coloured. The first candle is generally symbolic of Hope and Expectation. The third candle – the rose or pink candle – celebrates the Joy that is anticipated in the coming of Christ. The progressive lighting of the candles marks the journey towards the Nativity.

As we move into the festive season our staff will be begin their Religious Education units focusing on Christmas. This is a great opportunity for you to discuss the real meaning of Christmas with your children.

Staff Movement 2017

Last week, The Director of Schools announced the appointment of Miss Fiona Bylsma as the 2017 Principal at St Philip Neri, Northbridge. Miss Bylsma is a wonderful educator and leader. Whilst we will miss her here at St Agatha’s, St Phil’s has certainly gained an exceptional teacher and leader. We thank her for her contribution to St Agatha’s and wish her well on her new journey as Principal. We are currently in the process of selecting a new Assistant Principal for our school.

Miss Maryanne Kelly will also be leaving us, as she has been appointed to the staff at Sacred Heart, Mona Vale. They too have gained a fine teacher and leader. We thank her for the contribution to our school and wish her great success at Sacred Heart.

Kevin Bauer - Principal

From the Assistant Principal

Aggies Christmas Carols Concert/End of Year Family BBQ - Wednesday 7th December

Our K-6 Christmas Carols Concert will be held on the Basketball Court Area on Wednesday the 7th of December. All children in Kinder to Year 6 will be participating in our Carols concert.

The evening will run as follows:
5:30pm onwards - Family Sausage Sizzle/BBQ.
6:15pm - Whole School Band Christmas Performance
6:50pm - K-6 students to be seated on the timber seating on the Basketball Court in their grade groups.
7pm Aggies K-6 Christmas Carols Concert (all students K-6)

The evening will be an wonderful opportunity to gather as a whole school community at the end of the school year.

Important Diary Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
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<tr>
<td>25 5R Assembly - 2:30pm</td>
<td>1  House Captain Speeches - 9:00am</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Family Mass - 9:00am</td>
<td>3-Year 3 Priest Visits - 11:30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 Open Classroom - 2:30pm</td>
<td>2-Student work books go home</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Captain Speeches - 9:30am</td>
<td>2G Assembly - 2:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 School Choir visiting Epping Club - 11:00am</td>
<td>7-Christmas concert - All school and band 6pm</td>
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<td>13-Year 6 Graduation 6pm</td>
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year and celebrate the joy of the Christmas season. Families are encouraged to bring their picnic blankets, beach chairs or fold up chairs for the evening’s entertainment. A separate note outlining further details and what students in each grade need to wear will be sent home this week. As this is a family function No Alcohol is Permitted

We hope every Aggie’s family can join us for our End of Year Christmas Concert and community social event.

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)
As you know the three school-wide behavioural expectations are:

• We are RESPECTFUL,
• We are RESPONSIBLE
We are LEARNERS.

This fortnight we will focus on the rule - We are learners - with a particular emphasis on how we can “Learn and let others learn”.

In order for our children to participate effectively as citizens of the 21st-century they need to be better-informed, to have greater thinking and problem-solving abilities, to be more self-motivated, to have a larger capacity for cooperative interaction, to possess more varied and more specialised skills, and to be more resourceful and adaptable than ever before (Pendergast, et. al., 2005). At St Agatha’s we teach many of these skills in our expert and cooperative group work, by explicitly teaching the generic life skills and through our inquiry approach to learning.

Our children will face rapidly changing circumstances and opportunities and these will demand the continuing acquisition of new knowledge, new skills and new abilities – and their efficient application.

We all need to be continually learning; learning how to do; how to know; how to be; and how to live together (Watson 2003, p.6). This is your chance as parents to show how you are a lifelong learner.

At home you might like to talk to your child/ren about how you learn new things and learn from your experiences. We are always encouraging children to “have a go” and attempt things that might be a new learning experience. If you are “having a go” at something new, playing a new sport or starting a new activity, you might like to talk to your child about your attempts as a lifelong learner.

Fiona Bylsma - Assistant Principal

From the REC

There are many people in our local community who struggle to maintain the basic necessities of life. As has been the tradition, the St Agatha’s Parish and school are anxious to help these people by donating Christmas Hampers. Many of the people we have been asked to help are the homeless and Sudanese community. I urge you to dig deeply into your pockets to help give food to make life a little easier for them.

Unfortunately, we haven’t been given much time to organise the hampers as the Hamper Mass is on Sunday, 4th December. This means all donations must be at school by Friday of next week. We have been asked to pack the food into cloth carry bags(e.g. Coles bags) so if you have any spare ones lying around at home, could you please send them in. The teachers have told the children the types of food that has been requested but this is only an indication. Thank you in anticipation.

I often like to put some examples of the children’s work in the newsletter to keep you informed of the wonderful work going on in the RE classrooms. Here’s a personal response about the work done during the Mission unit in Kindergarten.

St Agatha’s helped Cambodia by putting money around the basketball court. Our money is going to help Cambodia by providing money to pay for the tuk tuks. These tuk tuks take teachers around Cambodia to teach the children and give them fresh food and toys. By Isabella Daidone

God Bless

Vicki Ford - REC
Pastoral Care

For Sabbatical Week this term we have focussed on the theme of **Gratitude**. This is an appropriate theme at this time of year; today the United States are celebrating Thanksgiving. We are rapidly coming towards the end of another school year and it is the perfect opportunity to look back and reflect on the wonderful things that have happened. In my Year Six class this takes on greater significance as students look back on their primary years before moving onto high school. Of course not everything that happens in our lives is great, but if we change our mindset from one of self-pity to a feeling of gratitude it will enhance our lives in so many ways.

Research has shown the benefits of gratitude. These include:

- Opens the door to more relationships
- Improves physical health
- Improves psychological health
- Enhances empathy and reduces aggression
- Grateful people sleep better.
- Increases self esteem
- Increases mental strength

This week students have been reflecting on what they are grateful for in their lives. In the staffroom we have a gratitude wall to jot down the things we are grateful for. This week at the dinner table you might ask each family member to name something they are grateful for. By starting this way of thinking it can become part of our daily lives. This could be choosing to write a few sentences in a gratitude journal, or simply taking a moment to silently acknowledge all that you have; giving thanks can transform your life!

For more ideas on how to incorporate gratitude into your daily life, [click here](#).

*Fiona Tubb - Well-being Coordinator*

**Sports News**

**Polding Representative**

Congratulations to Kieran Jackson who is currently competing for Polding at the NSWPSSA cricket Championships in Sutherland.

**Year 6 Inter-house Basketball Competition**

The Year 6 Inter-house Basketball competition is reaching its last stages this week, with the final next week, with Chisholm and Polding competing for Year 6 Glory.

**P&F News**

On behalf of the P&F I would like to Congratulate Fiona Bylsma on her appointment to Principal at St Philip Neri Northbridge. Thanks for your support to Parents during your time at St Agatha's! We wish you well in your new role.

Thank you to the team of Parents who helped with gardening and yard maintenance on the weekend for the last working bee of 2016! Thank you Luke Palmer our P&F Maintenance co-ordinator for scheduling these in, we hope to schedule more in next year!

Thank you also to Julie Son and all the book fair helpers for the great book fair held this week.

Recently, I wrote about reviewing the structure of our P&F. Kevin and I have met with Prof Mike Gaffney and the Catholic Schools Office to help us work through the process of reviewing our current structure and determining how best to proceed towards a collaborative parent model. We will be consulting with parents in early 2017. Until then, the P&F will be continuing as it has in the past. We are working towards making our community more collaborative and suited to how our families in 2017 and beyond can engage best in our community for the benefit of our kids.
We need some volunteers to help with the End of year Christmas concert. If you are able to assist in setting up, cooking BBQ, cleaning up, please email your class parent.

We will be looking for our 2017 class parent volunteers shortly, more information will follow in the coming weeks.

*Jocelyn Hordern-Smith - P&F President*

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**Book Fair**

'Scholastic book fair ending soon! Only open tomorrow 8.15-9.30 and 2.30 -4 with a final day this Sunday 27th November 8-12.30. Last chance to buy the latest popular books for Christmas!'

Thank you!
Kind regards

*Julie S - Book club Co-ordinator*

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**Congratulations**

Congratulations to Michael R who passed his third grade A.M.E.B clarinet exam with Honours. Well done Michael.

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**Gold Awards**

Mia C, Charlotte E, Jacob H, Kieran J, Isabella K, Ananya K, Olivia M, Adrihanna M, Suhaila S, Samantha S, Elena T

**Silver Awards**


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Amelia C, Sheryl M, Finnian R, Sophie B, Emma B, Belinda H

**Community News**

Drama
Eliza Jane - Dance
Norther Beaches Support Group - Mark Brandtman
Service of Remembrance

TROOSH Contact Greg on 0423 647 607