Dear Parent/s and Guardian/s,

Thank you for my warm welcome to St Laurence’s. It has been a joy meeting so many smiling, polite and engaging students. I am blessed in having been selected as your Principal and look forward to working with you all to continue the wonderful work of our school in helping shape outstanding young people. It will take time for me to learn all the faces, names and relationships but I will endeavour to achieve this goal before too long. I am always available to chat, discuss concerns or brainstorm ideas. I hope to see many of you at our school mass tomorrow.

Regards, Kate Dourley.

Late arrivals and early departure: We understand that on occasions there may be circumstances that mean that children may arrive late to school. By law children arriving late (after 8:55am) must be signed in by a parent/guardian. The same applies if your child/ren need to leave the school early. Parent/Guardian must notify the office and the child signed out. Students cannot leave the school grounds during the day without adult supervision.

Lord our God, you are the Source of love. Help us to love you with all our hearts and to love each other as you love us.

Amen.

Ogilvy Street Bus Zones:

Reminder— It has come to our attention that some parents are using Ogilvy Street to pick up children after school or drop off children in the morning. Some parents are pulling in just after the bus zone and blocking buses in.

We remind you that from 8:15am—9:30am and 3:00pm—4:00pm is FOR BUSES ONLY. Please do not use Ogilvy Street for drop off or pick up during these times.

The speed limit for school zones along Ogilvy and Brumley & Horn Streets is 40 kLms.

You are invited to our opening school mass in the church

9:30am

29th January

All most welcome to attend.
FISH’N’CHIP NIGHT

Each year we hold an informal get together in the school grounds at the start of the year. 

BYO food/fish’n’chips/pizza/salad etc. 
Bring along your picnic blankets/chairs etc.

Families are invited to get together on 
Friday 5th February 
at 6:00pm.
Being at school is a very long day for a little person. Each Wednesday for the month of February Preps are not required at school.

No School for Preps:
- Wednesday 3rd Feb
- Wednesday 11th Feb
- Wednesday 17th Feb
- Wednesday 24th Feb
Preps attend every day onwards from 1st March.

SWIMMING PROGRAM & REBATES FOR PREP—6

REBATES: For ALL families Prep—6 who have a full year membership with SPLASH, your attendance at the pool may be covered and be eligible for a swimming rebate off your school fees if you provide a copy of your card by Friday 5th February. Rebates will not be available after this time for ANY GRADE. AGAIN THIS APPLIES TO ALL FAMILIES PREP—6.

Swimming program notes For grades 3–6 have gone home today. Please return indemnity form tomorrow as swimming commences on Monday.

CHANGE TO SENIOR ATHLETICS DATE

PLEASE NOTE A CHANGE OF DATE FOR THE 3-6 HOUSE ATHLETICS SPORTS: New date is 22nd March.

WORKING WITH CHILDMORES CHECK

This year we will continue to explore improved parent participation and help in the classrooms and on excursions. However it is important to remind you that parents wishing to help in schools are required to have a Working with Children Check and inform the office once this is complete as we keep a data base of parents who have this check. This check can be applied for through the post office and is free for volunteers.

BELL TIMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Period</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.55am</td>
<td>Morning Bell</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.05–1.45pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.05–11.25am</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15pm</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2015 CONCERT DVD’S

DVD’s are ready and to be picked up from the office. They are $5 each.

ABSENCES FOR BUS TRAVELLERS

All bus travellers are on a checklist which teachers will take out during bus supervision. If your child is NOT travelling on their bus as usual, please let the office know. This will avoid teacher waiting /looking for children on their bus travel lists. The Brumley Street shuttle bus that travels from St Laurence’s to the Secondary School need to leave by 3:22pm. Therefore, children are asked to make their way to the Brumley St gate as soon as possible after the bell. Please talk to your children regarding this. (This DOES NOT apply to town buses as they are not part of the network). Please make contact with the school prior to 2:30pm.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication at any time during the year, you must fill in the official medical form which are available from the office foyer. All efforts will be made to meet medication times.

STUDENT ABSENCES

If your child is absent from school at any time, including being late or withdrawing from school early—the appropriate form needs to be filled in. Each family was provided with 3 forms for home. You may copy more of these or are available from the school foyer next to the sign/out book. Please note that this form does not take the place of the sign in/out book. A parent or guardian must sign in late children or early withdrawal of children (forms maybe written when signing children in or out).

SICK CHILDREN

Children do not learn when they are unwell. Out of respect for staff and students, please keep your children home from school if they are unwell. It is recommended that children are kept home for 24 - 48 hours after gastro illness.

MEALS ON WHEELS

As part of our Community Services Program the Grade 6 students will assist parents with the delivery of Meals on Wheels. Meals on Wheels is a wonderful Shire of South Gippsland Community based program which aids those who need assistance in their homes with meals.

Volunteers: We will need more volunteers to participate in this program. Ideally we would like to have enough volunteers that you would only have to go for one day session once a term. You would be needed from approx 11:30am - 12:30pm and would take two grade 6 children to assist you. You do not have to be a grade 6 parent to help out.

Thanks to all our volunteers. If you wish to come on board. Please call Ellen on 0413 338 275 for more information or call the office.

ASTHMA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Parents please ensure that the school has the correct Asthma Management Plan for your child/ren. Ideally, we would require a new plan for each year so we are up to date with your child/ren’s needs.
Happy in the New Year

When you think about it, so much of our life is repetitive. We get up at the same time, follow a very similar routine each morning, we go to work at the same time and do pretty much the same thing there most days. Weekends might include some different activities. It can be hard to find new ways of thinking? And why isn’t that important anyway?

According to Albert Einstein, insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results! New Year gives us a chance to think about that – it’s probably one reason why we make New Year’s Resolutions. Sometimes doing the same things, following the same routine can help us get through the tough times but that can also numb our creativity, our sense of adventure – we can get stuck in a rut, not just career-wise or in our relationships, attitudes and ways of seeing and doing things but in our faith as well.

I sometimes meet people today who tell me that they no longer believe, they no longer have faith. In reality, many of them have rejected religion and religious beliefs and they seem to be ignoring the faith that is still within them, the faith that calls them to be curious, to seek meaning and purpose, the faith that calls them to address their spiritual thirst. Too often they reject a set of religious beliefs that suited them as a child but they have not sought a greater knowledge or understanding of them as they have matured. We wouldn’t accept that in other fields, so why would we find that acceptable that with our faith?

So here’s some suggestions for New Year’s resolutions.

Pope Francis urges us to ‘go outside’. In that way we might develop a habit of observation of natural beauties that surround us and, in doing that, we develop the fundamentally human attitudes of silence, listening, patient waiting, admiration, discovery of harmony, respect for the natural equilibrium of nature, the meaning of gratitude and contemplation. Observing and caring for nature helps us discover the beauty and wonder of God’, he said. That’s an impressive list! Often that means just putting away for a while the iPad or iPhone or whatever other electronic device we may have and getting outside. Cultivating that habit of observation and with it a sense of wonder is important, no matter what age we may be. We often associate that just with children. Big mistake! Firstly, awe and wonder are gifts from the Holy Spirit. We receive them at Baptism and again at Confirmation. They are the building blocks of faith, the cornerstone, as it were. They are gifts for every stage of life. If we let them, they keep on giving. Awe and wonder take us out of ourselves – they can also help us to realise that ‘I am not the centre of the universe, the be all and end all.’

Going outside can also be a source of great joy. Joy is essential to the spiritual life. Pope Francis reminded us of that in his first encyclical, The Joy of the Gospel. Joy is also one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit but, just like the gifts of awe and wonder, it needs to be used. Joy is not the same as happiness. We can be unhappy about many things, but joy can still be there because it comes from the knowledge that God loves us and, in St Paul’s words, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God (Rom 8:38).

Joy does not simply happen. We have to choose joy and keep on choosing it. It is a choice based on the knowledge that we belong to God and joy is the experience of knowing that we are loved unconditionally and that nothing — sickness, failure, emotional distress, oppression, war, or even death — can’t take that love away.

So take every day as a gift. It is. Every day offers new opportunities, new experiences, new challenges. Don’t let fear define the limits of what you can do in life. Fear can play an inordinate role in our lives. Of itself, fear is not a bad thing, after all we developed that sense because there are some things we ought to be very, very wary of — crocodiles, edges of cliffs, excessive speed, poison and so on. We developed fear because it helps keep us alive. But sometimes it is a lot easier to say “I couldn’t do that” than to ask ourselves “What am I really afraid of?” Doing the same things over and over may bring comfort and a sense of security, but does it bring growth and development? That applies to us at every age. One of the most common phrases used in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures is “Do not be afraid” — 365 times in fact. It is usually followed by the phrase “I am with you”.

So make this New Year a great one — joy-filled, creative and adventurous and, in Pope Francis’ words, leave room in our daily lives for the God of Surprises.

* Catechism of the Catholic Church #158, General Directory for Catechesis # 92

Regards
Jim Quilliman

Email: jquilliman@dcsinet.au

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