



Term 3 - 6 August 2020

NEWSLETTER

St. Monica's Primary School 20 Robinson Street
Moonee Ponds 3039
Phone (03) 9375 1132 www.stmonicasmp.catholic.edu.au

Faith
Hope
Love



Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Anthony Feeney

Principal: Mr. Peter Moore

Parish Office: Phone 9370 5035

SHP Number 0412 616 491

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I would like to think that this note will find you all well, but over the past few months, the term 'well' has morphed into a sliding scale unlike anything we have ever seen before. The pressures of work/life balance, home responsibilities, remote learning, work permits, curfews and grocery shopping(!) have become a blend of both the mundane and the surreal. So when I ask, "How are you travelling?" I can assume that some of you will be travelling better than others.

Over the past week, I've had communication with a number of parents who appear like they're approaching *the straw that broke the camel's back*. I think we all know we're getting close to that point when little things threaten to tip us over the edge. And I mean little things. I can identify with that.

Yesterday I thought I'd eat my lunch and begin my self-portrait. You might be aware that I supplied each of the children with a little canvas board—with the aim of promoting the visual arts: calming, centering and relaxing 'drawing'. I also asked the staff to do the same, so I got out my board and began drawing. Let's just say it wasn't as easy as I thought and manipulating these art materials gave me a new appreciation of the skills needed for successful portrait drawing. Without sounding dramatic, the art piece nearly ended up a Frisbee.

Luckily I managed to identify my feelings and I walked away. I feel embarrassed to admit that 'drawing a picture' made me a bit tense and grumpy. I wasn't facing losing my job, or worrying about putting food on the table. But it was a sign that things had been building up and I probably needed a little walk in the local park. Anyway, all was not lost; I came home and completed the drawing and it's no masterpiece. But I actually enjoyed it in the end when I'd slowed my thinking down and tried to relax.

I'm wondering how many of you have faced similar emotions over the past few weeks? The big things can compound and then the little things become bigger than they need to be. I hope that each of you have the equivalent 'walk in the park' that I had, but I know it's often not that simple. I worry that there are parents in our community who are finding our current situation very, very challenging.

How can I help?

- If you are worried about your school fees, please don't. It's the last thing I want you to worry about if you owe the school money. We can talk about that much later in the year if you're facing financial difficulties.
- If home learning is really hard for you to supervise, break in down into manageable parts. Be kind and understanding to the teachers; for every parent who wants less work, there's another who wants more, so there's no 'one size fits all'. Let your classroom teacher know how much you can cope with and everything will be OK. The key to this is communication. If the teacher knows you're under pressure she/he can adjust the expectations and offer you the support you need. We can't make the learning at home disappear, but we can listen to you if you're finding this all too hard.

- If you wake up one day and home learning is the equivalent of getting a root-canal filling, then have a rest day. Teach your children that it's OK to be in touch with your emotions and occasionally even the most capable person needs a sickie. Take a sickie if you need one! Call it a wellbeing day.
- Remember that the people who live in your house are the centre of your life. If you're feeling grumpy towards them, then pack up all the computers and have some green time, as opposed to screen time. Do something fun together. Make a cake. Get out some board games. Make a cubby with blankets and pillows. Do something completely unexpected to show the children that this pandemic can't take away our ability to throw caution to the wind and have some good old fashioned fun. I imagine that if you make a good enough cubby then it might generate some great story writing in the coming days. Call it 'research' for writing.
- Lastly, if one of your children talks to you about a learning activity from SeeSaw and it says, "Get out your Red Monkey Book and use your 2B pencil to draw five elephants" and no-one can find the Red Monkey Book and you know your toddler took the 2B pencil and buried it in the garden, then please take a big deep breath and relax. Your child will try and convince you that it HAS to be in the Red Monkey Book. And it has to be in 2B pencil, not the one you picked up from the Big Pineapple Resort in Queensland! Teachers are well aware of the power of 'the teacher said...' but we don't do it to persecute parents. I apologise for the power we have. To get you out of trouble, please use the following limited-edition pandemic certificate with my best wishes:



Mr. Moore's Certificate for Exasperated Parents

This certificate entitles:

.....

to make suitable adjustments to the teacher's work requirements. This includes, but it not limited to:

- Interchanging the Monkey Book for the Turtle Book or the Book that you find either in the cupboard or at 7-Eleven* (*prior to State Curfew at 8:00pm)
- Altering required colours, writing instruments, types of paper etc
- Making time adjustments to work submission that are incompatible with today's important work calls
- Replacing one day's work requirements with cubby making, yoga, slip 'n' slide etc

Special Offer: This certificate comes with the right to use one "Mr Moore Said..." which will trump any "My Teacher Said..."

Please Note: For Emergency use only. Don't try this certificate too often or the teachers will be after me!

DISCLAIMER: "Mr Moore Said..." cannot be used for bedtime, housework or putting out the bins.

Stay well everyone and please know that I am thinking of you all during these challenging times.

Regards,

Peter Moore

Principal

A Letter from Fr Tony

My friends,

Who would have thought????

Many of us would have begun this year looking forward to a variety of things – family celebration of one sort or another as we welcomed a new born into our family and our Church; the celebration of First Reconciliation and First Communion for our younger sons and daughters; a successful year 12 for our older sons and daughters who themselves would have been anticipated enjoying a final year of secondary school and the celebrations that accompany such a mile stone event; there would have been Weddings and wedding anniversaries many would have been looking forward to celebrating, not to forget the overseas holidays that had planned!

Yet here we are, undergoing curfew, wearing masks, schools closed, restricted to only an hours exercise a day; here we are being tossed from pillar to post in a way we never foresaw or dreamt of; our lives turned upside down all because of a small deadly, invisible, virus.

Today's Gospel has Jesus telling the apostles to *get into the boat and go ahead to the other side*; go ahead and make what, for them, would have been a regular trip across to the other side. However, as we hear, things go awry; as they are crossing to the other side they get caught up in a storm, before long they *are battling with a heavy sea and a strong head wind*. In fear for their lives Jesus comes, *in the 4th watch of the night*, so we are told – is there something there for us to ponder on as we enter our 4th watch, or, our 4th stage of Covid19 restrictions?

4th watch was always just before day break – just before the light of a new day would begin to show itself. It is at that moment, just before daybreak, that Jesus comes! The apostles, being understandably tired, exhausted and unprepared, think they are seeing a ghost and become even more fearful, all except Peter who says: *If you really are the Lord, tell me to come to you across the water*. 'Come', says Jesus. As Peter, gets out of the boat and starts walking, he is overcome with the force of the wind he panics, takes fright and begins to sink.

We can be feeling a bit like Peter at the moment, we are doing our bit, wearing the mask, observing safe distancing, etc. and still we seems to be sinking – where are you Lord?

He is here, he doesn't want us to sink; he does not want the boat (*often a reference for the church*) or his friends (*all of us*) to go down; he wants us to come through this testing time with an enriched appreciation of Him and a deeper appreciation of one another – we are all in this together *with Him*!

Let us recall the words of St. Paul from last week; *There is nothing, real or imagined, that can come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our lord*. (Rom 8:39) and take to heart some words of wisdom from our own St. Mary of the Cross Mac Killop: *'Let us lean more on God and less on ourselves.'*

Fr. Tony

A Letter from the Parish Team

We are jumping on the "ZOOM-MOBILE"

Dear Friends,

We hope you are all safe and well during this challenging time. Our Parish Pastoral Team is planning to put together a number of Zoom sessions to catch up and stay in touch over the next few weeks and months. To start off with, we would like to provide the following:

1. Scripture Reflection

- This session will reflect on the following Sunday's Gospel and also a discussion around the Gospel of Matthew. If you have any burning questions, now is the time to ask. First session will start on Friday, 14th Aug @ 7 pm.

2. Praying the Rosary

- According to the Catholic Tradition, the Rosary was instituted by the Blessed Virgin Mary herself. How nice would it be to pass on to our younger generation the principal events or mysteries in history? Feel free to make this a family activity, and please bring your children and/or grandchildren. First session is on Saturday, 15th of Aug @ 7 pm, which happens to be the Solemn Feast Day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

3. A virtual cuppa (or wine! We are from St. Monica's after all)

- Companionship is what we are offering. Let us spend a half-hour, maybe an hour in each other's company. Let us share our stories and woes. This will run on the second Friday of each month from 5-6 pm. First session is Friday, the 14th of Aug.

The success of these sessions, depend on your participation. Please give one or all of them a go!! If you are interested even so slightly drop us an email to register and we will then send you the link. If you have any enquiry or problem accessing Zoom, please let us know via the email also.. <mailto:stmonicaspastoralteam@gmail.com>

We are very excited to make a start and are looking forward to seeing you. Will you jump on the Zoom-Mobile with us? Keep safe and well, God bless

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Tony, Fr. Andrew, and Abygaile (Pastoral Assistant)

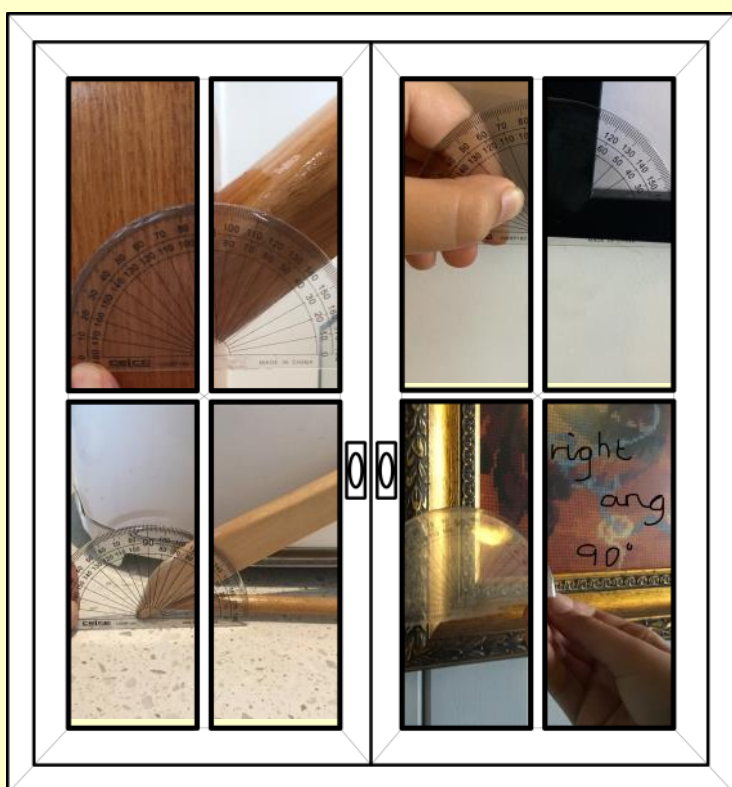
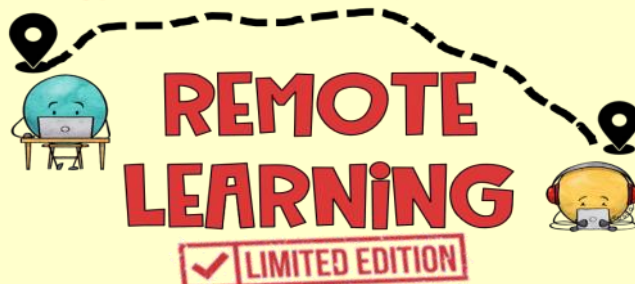
Your Parish Pastoral Team -



SeeSaw has been 'binging' with notifications of all the great work during remote and flexible learning. Here are some examples:

home-made wheels and axles (Year 1)
discovering angles at home (Year 5)
measuring family heights (Foundation)
sundials (Year 3)
more letters to Grandparents
self-portraits
the joy of reading, and don't forget to fill in your daily journal!

CAUGHT in the ACT



Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) On School Students with Disability

What is the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data?

Schools must now complete the *Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)* every year. It counts the number of students who receive additional adjustments or “help” at school because of a disability. The NCCD helps governments plan for the needs of students with disability.

Who is counted in the data collection?

To count a student in the NCCD, schools must think through some key questions:

1. Is the student getting help at school so that they can take part in education on the same basis as other students?
2. Is the help given because of a disability? The word ‘disability’ comes from the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (DDA) and it can include many students.
3. Has the school talked to you or your child about the help that they provide?
4. Has the school kept records about the help they provide, the student needs and the reasons that the student needs this help? The school will need to keep copies of tests, student work, assessments, records of meetings, medical reports or other paperwork and information about how the student’s learning is moving along over time.

Once the school decides that the student should be counted in the NCCD, they then choose a disability group and one of four levels of help that has been given to the student.

What does the word ‘disability’ mean in the NCCD?

In the NCCD the word ‘disability’ comes from the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (DDA). There are four types of disability that the school can choose from: sensory, cognitive, social-emotional and physical.

Many students that need help at school can be counted in the NCCD. For example, students with learning problems, e.g. specific learning disability or reading difficulty (sometimes called dyslexia), health problems (e.g. epilepsy or diabetes), physical disability (e.g. cerebral palsy), vision/hearing loss and social-emotional problems (e.g. selective mutism, Autism Spectrum Disorder, anxiety).

Letters from doctors or specialists can be very helpful for schools as they plan how to support students with their learning. Schools do not need to have these letters before they can count a

student in NCCD. Teachers can use all that they know about the student's learning and the records that they have collected over time to decide if a student can be counted in the NCCD.

What sort of help does the school give students?

Students need different types of help at school. Some students need a little help sometimes while other students need a lot of help nearly all the time. The type of help given depends on the needs of the student. The help can include changes to the school buildings or grounds (e.g. ramps or things like special desks or chairs), extra teacher help in classes, special learning programs, changes to the work they give the student or extra adult help.

How will the NCCD be different this year?

All schools have been counting students in the NCCD since 2015. The government will use the NCCD data as part of the funding to schools.

What will the school need to know about my child for the NCCD?

Schools work together with families to understand the needs of each child. It is helpful if families give their child's teacher a copy of any letters or reports they have. The letters or reports will help the school understand the child and the help that they might need. Letters from doctors, psychologists, speech pathologists, doctor, and occupational therapists etc. can be very helpful for schools. These reports along with information that the teacher has (i.e. school based tests, your child's work and learning plans) helps the school to understand and meet your child's needs.

What happens to the NCCD data? Who will have the NCCD information?

Each school principal must check the NCCD data in August of each year. The school will give the information to the Catholic Education Office. The school will work with the Catholic Education Office to make sure that the NCCD data is OK before they give the data to the government. The government will not be given the names of any students or any letters or records. Please ask your school for their privacy policy if you need to know more.

Does the school need me to agree with them about counting my child in the NCCD?

Amendments were made to the [Australian Education Act 2013](#) and [Australian Education Regulation 2013](#). Schools do not need you to agree to let them count a child in the NCCD. You cannot ask the school not to count your child.

Where can I find out more?

Please contact your child's school if you have further questions about the NCCD and/or refer to the national [NCCD Portal](#).