



Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024  
Term 4 - Week 8 of 11

Dear Parents, Students & Friends of St Catherine's,

### That Child....

As we approach the final weeks of this school year, and as we enter the season of Advent, it's a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the journey we have taken, the challenges we have encountered and overcome, along with the many successes we have achieved this year. Most importantly, the development that has occurred for each and every child within this beautiful school.

At this time, I ask you to take the opportunity to reflect with me upon the progress made this year in your child's development, their social, emotional, physical and spiritual development; the highs, the lows, the challenges and the successes.

For myself, the greatest successes are to be found in the children and staff who have had the greatest challenges.

Located in this newsletter is a reflection written to parents titled 'That Child'. It tells of the journey experienced by teachers, principals, carers, and even yourself, conveying the uniqueness of the heart that is within each of us, in caring for each, and every child at St Catherine of Siena.

This is our Advent heart, a heart that carries within it compassion, forgiveness and hope.

May 'that child' bring out the best within us, and we in turn bring out the best in 'that child'.

I strongly encourage you to take the opportunity to read this reflection and take it to heart as I have read and taken to heart the many emails about such children and your children this year.



### The Four Candles

Advent wreaths are a symbolic way of reminding us of the season of advent. There is a beautiful story about 'The Four Candles' that appear on the advent wreath. It goes like this;

The Four Candles burn slowly. The ambiance was so soft; you could hear them speak. The first one said: I am Peace! "However, nobody can keep me lit. I will go out". Its flame rapidly diminishes and goes out completely.

The second one said: I am Faith! "Most of all I am no longer indispensable, it doesn't make any sense that I stay lit any longer." When it finished talking, a breeze softly blew on it putting it out.

Sadly, the third candle spoke in its turn: I am Love! "I haven't got the strength to stay lit. People put me aside and don't understand my importance. They even forget to love those who are nearest to them." And waiting no longer, it goes out.

Suddenly, a child enters the room and sees three candles not burning. "Why are you not burning? You are supposed to stay lit till the end." Saying this, the child begins to cry. Then the fourth candle said: "Don't be afraid, for while I am still burning, we can re-light the other candles. I am Hope."

With shining eyes, the child took the candle of Hope and lit the other candles.

The story illustrates that with the flame of hope each of us can live with peace, faith and love.

This weekend, the Church officially enters the season of Advent, full of hope. The school however is currently focused on the Second Week of Advent. (Yes, we like to get ahead of ourselves for the reasons we explained in last week's newsletter in preparing students for Christmas).

The readings call us to 'Prepare the way of the Lord'. May we, through our words and actions, be a candle and the light to others so that they may have hope, faith, love and peace during this time of Advent so that we do not misunderstand the true meaning of Christmas.

## 2025 Student Transition

Next week, your child/ren will undertake the first of two Transition Days for 2025. They will meet their new classmates, their new teacher and visit their new classroom. In preparing 21 class lists, we have done our best to respond to over 180+ parent and teacher requests, sought to place students with at least one of the three friends they have nominated, and ensured that the parameters set out in our student placement policy are reflected in the classrooms created.

Located in the next column is the agenda for the transition mornings. We seek to share it with you so that, as a parent, a carer, a student, you better understand the planning and logistics that go into such a day. As the saying goes, 'if you fail to plan, you plan to fail'.

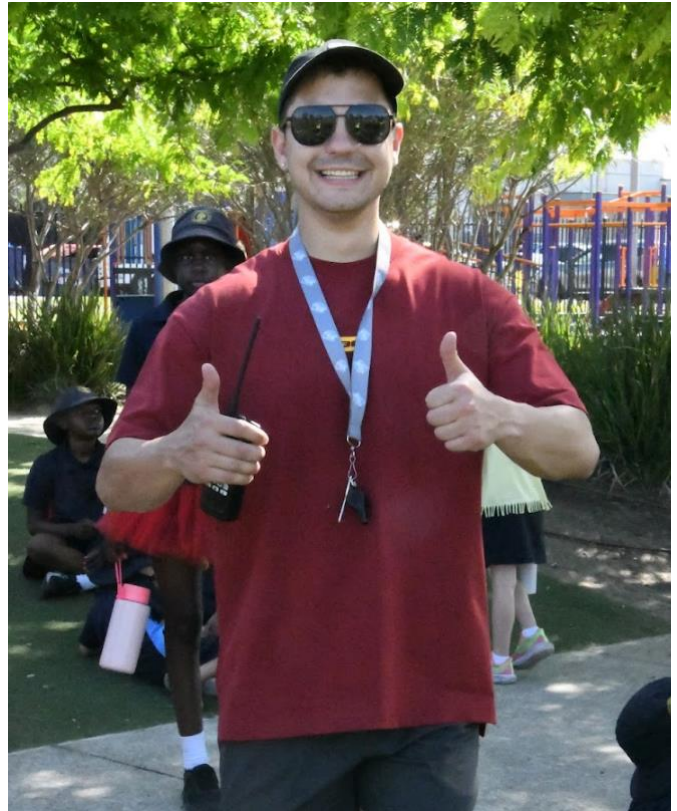
## End of Year Student Reports

As communicated earlier in the year, the student reports this semester intend to provide far greater information about the learning that has occurred in the semester than what had been previously provided. We are pleased now to be able to claim that the information provided is factual, based upon data and reflects a process of moderation that reflects accuracy and focussed goals for 2025.

Parents who wish to speak or meet with their teacher regarding their child's end of year report, are asked to please contact the school to make such an appointment. In turn, teachers may wish to follow up with specific parents regarding their child's progress. If this does occur, I strongly encourage you to please make yourself available to meet with your child's teacher.

## Directors of First Impression (Parents)

Please remember the saying "Directors of First Impression" for that is exactly what you are when your child comes home to tell you of their new teacher. Your expressions and words will have far more impact than anything we can say and do. Let's make the first impression a great one!



## Sports Carnival Success

Despite the unseasonal temperatures, our 2024 Sports Carnival was a resounding success. We wish to congratulate and thank Mr Nathan Galea for the enormous work undertaken in planning and communicating with staff and parents in order to make this day so successful.

Wishing you a safe and restful weekend and looking forward to being back on deck this coming Monday.

With my kindest regards,

Des Noack  
**Principal**

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*To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch.... To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.*

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

## 2025 Student Transition Timetable

The following outlines the timetable and the process used to facilitate student transitioning to their new classrooms for Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December & Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December.

### Day 1 – Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December

**11.30 -11.40am**

**Teachers to read out 2025 classes to their current students**

- Grade 6 students move directly to the oval (hall if poor weather) and are supervised by Specialist staff.

**11.40 - 11.45am**

**Movement of classes proceeds with attention to the following:**

- All classrooms to be labelled with A4 signage that states the name of the classroom. (This is to be done during recess)
- Prior to moving to hall, ensure that students take drink bottles to new classes.
- Move to hall and line up with new teacher as displayed via projector re new 2025 seating map.

**11.45 – 11.55am**

**Affirmation of students as they move to their new classrooms.**

- Teachers and students move to their classrooms (PBL focus - moving safely).
- Teachers to provide any materials relevant to their activities.

**11.55 – 1.00pm**

**Orientation activities occur in new classes**

- Commence with prayer
- Activities to focus on peer connectivity & establishment of classroom culture

**1.00pm**

**All students and teachers move back to their existing assembly spaces.**

- Teachers and students return to normal yard assembly points (PBL focus - moving safely).
- Staff to provide feedback via email to leadership regarding any concerns observed during transition session for follow up. Email is to be used to ensure the observations or learning is not lost in the business of the coming week.

**1.00pm**

**New teachers and teachers covering for classes that currently do not have a teacher allocated to gather in the Planning Room.**

- To debrief and opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback

### Day 2- Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December

**11.30 -11.40am**

- Grade 6 students move directly to the oval (hall if poor weather) and are supervised by Specialist staff.

**Movement of classes proceeds with attention to the following:**

- All classrooms to be labelled with A4 signage that states the name of the classroom. (This is to be done during recess)
- Prior to moving to hall ensure that students take drink bottles to new classes
- Move to hall and line up as shown on projected new 2025 seating map.

**11.45 – 11.55am**

**Affirmation of students as they move to their new classrooms.**

- Teachers and students move to their classrooms (PBL focus - moving safely).

**11.55 – 1.00pm**

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- To debrief and opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback

# TERM 4

## Week 9

Monday 02/12

- **2025 Prep Transition Session 4 9am – 10am**

Tuesday 03/12

- Yr 7, 2025 Transition Day @ St Francis Catholic College 9am – 1pm
- Saint Francis Xavier
- **Whole School Advent Liturgy 8.50am**
- **2025 Student Transition Day 1 (Prep – Grade 5's) @ 11:30am - 1pm**
- Parent Support Group Meetings
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

Wednesday 04/12

- *Saint John Damascene*

Thursday 05/12

- Parent Support Group Meetings
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

Friday 06/12

- Saint Nicholas
- **Whole School Assembly 2.30pm**

Saturday 07/12

- Saint Ambrose

Sunday 08/12

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Of Advent
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## Week 10

Monday 09/12

- The Immaculate Conception Of The Blessed Virgin Mary
- **2025 Student Transition Day 2 (Prep – Grade 5s) @ 11:30am - 1pm**

Tuesday 10/12

- **Whole School Advent Liturgy 8.50am**
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

Wednesday 11/12

- *Saint Damasus I*
- **Carols By Candlelight & Family Picnic 5.00pm - 7.30pm**

Thursday 12/12

- Year 4 excursion to CERES
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

Friday 13/12

- Saint Lucy
- **2025 Prep Transition Session 5 9am – 10am**
- **Whole School Assembly 2.30pm**
- **Reports sent home**

Saturday 14/12

- Saint John of the Cross

Sunday 15/12

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Of Advent



## Week 11

Monday 16/12

- **Year 6 Big Day Out**
- Team Leaders Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

Tuesday 17/12

- Parent Helper Afternoon Tea @ 2:15pm
- **Year 6 Graduation Night 6.00pm**

Wednesday 18/12

- **Whole School Liturgy 10am – Advent Wk. 4**
- **End of Year Award Ceremony @ 2:00pm**
- **Last Day of Term 4 – Dismissal Time 3:15pm**

# That Child.....

Dear Parent:

I know. You're worried.

Every day, your child comes home with a story about THAT kid. The one who is always hitting, shoving, pinching, scratching, maybe even biting other children. The one who always has to hold my hand in the hallway. The one who has a special spot at the carpet, and sometimes sits on a chair rather than the floor. The one who had to leave the toy shop because blocks are not for throwing. The one who climbed over the playground fence right exactly as I was telling her to stop. The one who poured his neighbour's milk onto the floor in a fit of anger, on purpose, while I was watching and then, when I asked him to clean it up, emptied the ENTIRE paper towel dispenser on purpose, while I was watching. The one who dropped the REAL ACTUAL #@#-word in class.

You're worried that THAT child is detracting from your child's learning experience. You're worried that he takes up too much of my time and energy, and that your child won't get his fair share. You're worried that she is really going to hurt someone someday. You're worried that "someone" might be your child. You're worried that your child is going to start using aggression to get what she wants. You're worried your child is going to fall behind academically because I might not notice that he is struggling to hold a pencil. I know.

Your child, this year, in this classroom, at this age, is not THAT child. Your child is not perfect, but she generally follows rules. He is able to share toys peaceably. She does not throw furniture. He raises his hand to speak. She works when it is time to work, and plays when it is time to play. He can be trusted to go straight to the bathroom and straight back again with no shenanigans. I know.

I know, and I am worried, too.

You see, I worry all the time. About ALL of them. I worry about your child's pencil grip, and another child's letter sounds, and that little tiny one's shyness, and that other one's chronically empty lunch box. I worry that Gavin's coat is not warm enough, and that Talitha's dad yells at her for printing the letter "B" backwards. Most of my car rides and showers are consumed with these concerns.

But I know, you want to talk about THAT child. Because Talitha's backward "B"s are not going to upset your child.

I want to talk about THAT child, too, but there are so many things I can't tell you.

I can't tell you that she was adopted from an orphanage at 18 months.

I can't tell you that he is on an elimination diet for possible food allergies, and that he is therefore hungry ALL THE TIME.

I can't tell you that her parents are in the middle of a horrendous divorce, and she has been staying with her grandma.

I can't tell you that I'm starting to worry that grandma drinks...

I can't tell you that his asthma medication makes him agitated.

I can't tell you that her mom is a single parent, and so she (the child) is at school from the moment before-care opens, until the moment after-care closes, and then the drive between home and school takes 40 minutes, and so she (the child) is getting less sleep than most adults.

I can't tell you that he has been a witness to domestic violence.

That's OK, you say. You understand that I can't share personal or family information. You just want to know what I am DOING about that child's behaviour.

I would love to tell you. But I can't.

I can't tell you that she receives speech-language services, that an assessment showed a severe language delay, and that the therapist feels the aggression is linked to frustration about being unable to communicate.

I can't tell you that I meet with his parents EVERY week, and that both of them usually cry at those meetings.

I can't tell you that the child and I have a secret hand signal to tell me when she needs to sit by herself for a while.

I can't tell you that he spends play time curled beside me because he tells me "it makes me feel better to hear your heart, Teacher."

I can't tell you that I have been meticulously tracking her aggressive incidents for three months, and that she has dropped from five incidents a day, to five incidents a week.

I can't tell you that the school secretary has agreed that I can send him to the office to "help" when I can tell he needs a change of scenery.

I can't tell you that I have stood up in a staff meeting and, with tears in my eyes, BEGGED my colleagues to keep an extra close eye on her, to be kind to her even when they are frustrated that she hit someone AGAIN, and this time, RIGHT IN FRONT OF A TEACHER.

The thing is, there are SO MANY THINGS I can't tell you about that child. I can't even tell you the good stuff.

I can't tell you that his classroom job is to water the plants, and that he cried with heartbreak when one of the plants died over the school break.

I can't tell you that she kisses her baby sister goodbye every morning, and whispers "You are my sunshine" before mum pushes the stroller away.

I can't tell you that he knows more about thunderstorms than most meteorologists.

I can't tell you that she often asks to help sharpen the pencils during playtime.

I can't tell you that she strokes her best friend's hair at play time.

I can't tell you that when a classmate is crying, he rushes over with his favourite toy from the story corner.

The thing is, dear parent, that I can only talk to you about YOUR child. So, what I can tell you is this:

If ever, at any point, YOUR child, or any of your children, becomes THAT child...

I will not share your personal family business with other parents in the classroom.

I will communicate with you frequently, clearly, and kindly.

I will make sure there are tissues nearby at all our meetings, and if you let me, I will listen with an open heart.

I will advocate for your child and family to receive the highest quality of specialist services, and I will cooperate with those professionals to the fullest possible extent.

I will make sure your child gets extra love and affection when she needs it most.

I will be a voice for your child in our school community.

I will, no matter what happens, continue to look for, and to find, the good, amazing, special, and wonderful things about your child.

I will remind him and YOU of those good, amazing, special, wonderful things, over and over again.

And when another parent comes to me, with concerns about YOUR child...

I will tell them all of this, all over again.

With so much love,

Teacher



This Weeks Gospel Is That Of The Readings In Two Weeks Time. The School Has Brought Forward The Teaching Of Advent To Ensure That We Are Able To Do So In The School Time Provided.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke 3:1-6

*All people shall see the salvation of God.*

*In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:*

*A voice cries in the wilderness;*

*Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.*

*Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth.*

*And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.*

## Gospel Reflection

The second and third weeks of Advent this year focus particularly on the role of John the Baptist as the one who prepared the way for Jesus and announced his coming. It continues the theme of preparation that was begun last week, but still, rather than preparing for the birth of Jesus, we are

exploring the wider theme of preparation. The gospel writer includes a quote from Isaiah in which the prophet says, 'Prepare a way for the Lord.' (Often translated as 'Prepare the way of the Lord'.) The application of this passage to John the Baptist is a logical one. This gospel emphasises that John was preaching 'a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins'. Throughout the gospel of Luke, the recognition of sinfulness and the desire to repent and seek forgiveness is the prelude to receiving God's favour.

This gospel makes it clear that one way in which we can prepare a way for the Lord is to recognise our faults and failings and to seek forgiveness. It is only through such repentance that we can make ourselves receptive to the love of God. The only preparation of the way that is necessary for the Lord is a personal preparation to be receptive. We are absolutely assured of God's love. The problem is that we often feel that we are undeserving of that love or are unable to receive it. When we are called to 'Prepare a way for the Lord' it is a call to prepare a way in our own hearts – to break down the barriers that we have put up; to clear the obstacles that we have placed in the path. God's love will find a way! We simply make the way easier for ourselves to recognise God's love if we 'Prepare a way'.

### Historical Context – At this time

This particular gospel goes to great lengths to place the events of Jesus' life in a particular historical context. It is the gospel of Luke that identifies the birth of Jesus as taking place in the reign of Caesar Augustus and the governorship of Quirinius. Again, in today's passage, the writer is keen to establish the historical time and place. It is made clear that the ministry of Jesus occurred in a particular time and place. But the gospel makes clear that the message Jesus proclaimed reaches beyond its original context across time and place to our lives today.

### Have you thought? Baptism

We may think that Baptism is an invention of the Christian community but today's gospel makes it clear that baptism was used within the Jewish community and was put to a particular purpose by John the Baptist. Baptism was part of the Jewish tradition well before the time of Jesus. Ritual cleansing by full immersion was an important element of worship and converts to Judaism were required to walk through a deep bath known as a *mikveh*. John's use of baptism as a washing away of sin was a different interpretation of the well established practice.

### Living the Gospel – Make way!

Today's gospel is a reminder to us that Advent is a season of preparation. In this case, the preparation is all about making way for the love of God in our

lives. The love of God surrounds us all the time. It's like a rapidly flowing stream and sometimes we have placed boulders in the stream that send the water flowing around us. The call to make a way for the Lord is a call to clear the rocks out of the stream; to remove the obstacles that are directing the love of God around us and allow it instead to flow directly through us.



#### Prep A

Georgia D - For excellent fluency in addition and subtraction of maths facts to 10. Keep it up!!

Jessie M - For always being an exceptional example of our school values (Respect, Safety, Kind & Responsible) in the classroom and outside at play.

#### Prep B

Rubaab K - For demonstrating excellent fluency in your addition facts to 10.

Immaculate N - For demonstrating fantastic fluency in your addition facts to 10.

#### Prep C

Cyrus N - For being a great role model at showing our school value of respect in our classroom.

Amalia E - For segmenting and blending words when reading a decodable text and answering questions about the text.

#### Year 1B

Aluel A – For writing a fantastic recount of the Christmas story.

Luwayne S – For using bar models to partition and add.

#### Year 1C

Micky G - For showing amazing growth in your reading! Keep it up!

Jason P - For showing resilience and maintaining steady attendance. This has made a positive impact on your learning journey.

**Year 2A**

Sienna L - For scanning the text to ensure you accurately answer comprehension questions when reading. Amazing work!

Olivia V - For using your phonemic knowledge to decode unknown words when reading. Keep up the great work!

**Year 2B**

Chase H - For being a kind and caring friend when helping others in our classroom. Well done Chase!

Levi S - For independently adding in adverbs to your sentences to ensure extra detail is included. Well done Levi!

**Year 2C**

Taylah D - For your participation in all learning areas and for being respectful when working with others. Keep up the fantastic effort!

Lukas F - For trying your best each day to be respectful, safe, responsible and kind. Amazing effort Lukas!

**Year 3A**

Anthony M - For showing outstanding growth in your spelling test. Keep up the great work.

Hailey C - For showing amazing growth in your reading test. Keep up the great work.

**Year 3B**

Tayla F - For always coming to school with a positive attitude ready and responsible for the day's learning.

Krishna C - For always working hard in all your subjects. You have a fantastic attitude to learning.

**Year 3C**

Bailey M - For demonstrating focus and dedication while writing your narrative this week. Keep up the great writing Bailey!

Roman H - For consistently challenging yourself in Mathematics and demonstrating a strong commitment to learning.

**Year 4A**

Chelsea H - For your amazing growth and determination in learning your multiplication strategies during free time and home learning.

Indyanah M - For your amazing effort and growth learning equivalent fractions

**Year 4B**

Xavier M - For showing increased confidence in contributing your learnt knowledge during class discussions. Keep up your good work.

Isabel R - For being proactive in assisting the

teacher in the daily classroom chores and also showing great attitude to her learning.

**Year 4C**

Jacob D - For your effort in recognising equivalent fractions for a  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Dit P - For excellent demonstration of the structural features of a procedural text when publishing your writing.

**Year 5A**

Garang G - For outstanding perseverance during our fractions unit. Your hard work and growth mindset is admirable.

Mireille I - For demonstrating greater mindfulness in your actions and consistently making thoughtful decisions in class

**Year 5C**

Ofeina T - Being a helpful and kind member of class, well done and keep it up!

Logan W - Taking on challenges while adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators.

**Year 6A**

Asha A - For your continued developing resilience and independence when completing tasks as shown in our Time unit.

Charlotte S - For your dedication and consistent approach to all learning tasks! Well done super star!

Sienna L - For showing a consistently mature and engaged approach to your learning tasks, taking responsibility for your academic development! Well done!

**Year 6B**

Ayen M - For your progress in having a growth mindset in your learning this semester. Thank you for your willingness to volunteer ideas in the classroom and your increased ability to persevere with challenging tasks.

Meyen M - For making accelerated growth in reading and mathematics this semester. Keep up the great work ethic.

**Year 6C**

Aweng B - For showcasing strong leadership and organisational skills during debate planning. You worked collaboratively with your team and ensured everyone stayed on track to plan well delivered arguments.

Dylan K - For demonstrating excellent leadership and teamwork during debate planning. You participated enthusiastically, worked closely with your group, and helped organise ideas to create strong and well-structured arguments.



St Catherine of Siena

# Family

**Come and enjoy a night of Christmas  
Carols and performances from  
students across the school.  
A great event to celebrate the  
Christmas season!**

*Wednesday, 11th  
December*

**BYO Picnic beginning at 5pm  
Carols begin at 6pm - 7:30pm**

**St Catherine of Siena  
Soccer Pitch!**

