

## Messages from Don:

Dear Parents, Students and Families,

I can't believe we only have three weeks remaining. In the last two weeks we have enjoyed so many positive learning experiences including Diwali celebrations, Transition Days, Pogo Pulse/Skipping Expo, Bike Education Program, RAA Safety lessons, Be Unique Wellbeing Day, and much more. However, we still have many events and activities to complete and look forward to Splash and Dash, Pageant, Carols, Graduation and of course our famous Concert. This is a wonderful time of the year full of memorable experiences.



### Finish Strong:

We have encouraged staff to remain positive and bring a focus on an attitude to 'Finish Strong'. The final term of the school year is a crazy time in schools and in our homes. We are more likely to be sensitive, 'thin skinned' and emotional because we are, busy, anxious, run down and in need of that well-earned break. But we shouldn't be surprised. The same thing happens at this time every year. The important thing is HOW we respond to this challenge.

It is when times are tough that reputations are truly made. It is important to finish strong, just like we started the year! Whilst our reserves may be running low it is vital to remain focused and finish the year well. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well. I reflected on an article by Stephen MR who describes when world-class marathon runners 'hit the wall' and they feel like they can't go on. Instead of focusing on their exhaustion and how tired they are feeling and going into the 'survival shuffle', they lift up their head and pick up the pace. I believe this is a vital mind set for us parents and staff at this time of the year. By picking up the pace, you are really saying to yourself that you're not just going to finish, you're going to finish strong!

### Challenge Cup Award:

Congratulations to St Therese Red who won the Challenge Cup activity for 'Find-a-word' competition with 359 points. St Mary MacKillop Blue finished with 319 points, followed by St Patrick Green on 302, and St Joseph Gold on 248 points.



### The Christmas Season: Advent ~ Challenge Cup – Good Deeds/Advent Attitudes and Action

We start the very special Season of Advent. This is the time when we begin to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ. All teachers have been talking about Advent and all the classrooms have the Advent Wreath displayed. As a Catholic Community we are encouraged to remember to think about what we are really celebrating. We certainly celebrate the Christmas Season but focus on the birth of Jesus. It is also a lovely idea to try to do something special for others. As a school, our last Challenge Cup event, will look at Good Deeds and Advent attitudes and actions. We will be promoting how we can show care, kindness, and goodwill. We will also support the Riverland Christmas Appeal, encouraging children to bring a gift to place under the giving tree in the office, do extra jobs around the school, do a special kind deed for someone who needs it, leave a note for someone telling them how much they are appreciated, etc. Have a wonderful time celebrating this magical season!



## **ST. THERESE'S RENMARK**

Fr Hau 0401 367 337  
8582 1894

26 Nov Sun 9.00am

2 Dec Sat 6.30pm

10 Dec Sun 9.00am

16 Dec Sat 6.30pm

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **November**

27 9.15am Assembly by Year 6s

28 Year 4s to Renmark Library

30 Children's Uni Graduation

### **December**

1 9.30am Parish Mass by 3/4GE

3 Carols in the Garden

5 10.30am Music Concert

5 11.30am Premier's Reading

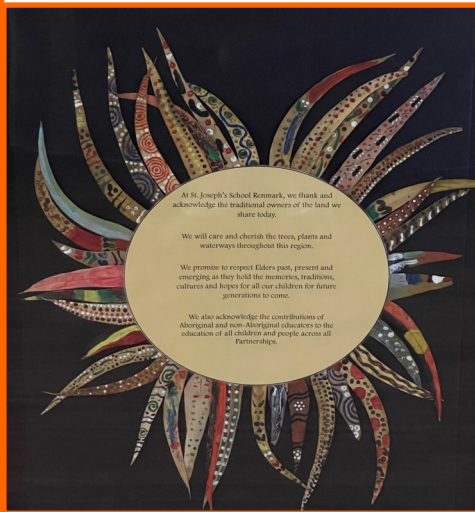
Challenge presentation

6 Splash & Dash Day

7 SRC Lunch

## **Acknowledgement:**

We acknowledge that St Joseph's School students, staff and community live, study and work on Erawirung Land. We acknowledge the First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee as Traditional Custodians of the Riverland region and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We respect the deep connection Aboriginal people have with land, animals and waters.



## **Final Transition Day :**

Last week was the final Transition Day for our 2024 Reception students. This was another successful day with so many memorable learning experiences. We received positive feedback about our whole Transition Program including the excellent Buddy Program. It is affirming, as Principal, to know that what we do with children and young people to support a positive start to schooling is effective. I congratulate all our Reception Staff, Year 5 buddies and all our new parents/carers for their support, commitment, enthusiasm and preparation.

## **Bike Education Program – Great Success:**

We were overwhelmed with the success of the recent R-2 Bike Education Program. We conducted our own program after successfully winning a grant to purchase 7 new bikes and helmets. We had lots of bikes and scooters come to school which allowed us to promote active and physical exercise. This was a great opportunity to also emphasise bike and road safety issues. We thank our PE Staff, Mr Canavan and Mrs Thompson, for their excellent organisation and participation.

## **Pogo Pulse & Jump Rope for Heart:**

This week our students participated in Pogo Pulse & Jump Rope For Heart Day, which is a unique program that promotes resilience and wellbeing. I congratulate all the selected students who showed outstanding improvement and represented our whole school admirably. I thank Mr Canavan, Mrs Thompson, Mrs Charnstrom, Miss Halliday, Mr Reeks, Mrs Hayes and Mr Kanakaris for their excellent support, organisation and time. I also sincerely thank Gay & Wayne Woosnam from Tri State Graphics for their considerable support with students' t-shirts.



Best of luck to everyone involved with Rachel McLeod's dance performances this weekend. For tickets:

<https://www.countryarts.org.au/events/oh-the-places-well-go-rachel-mcleod-dance-studios/>

## **Oh The Places We'll Go**



## **Children's University:**

On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November, I will be attending our school's Children's University Graduation night at the Renmark Institute. We have an amazing 17 students attending from Years 3-6 who will receive their certificates and officially graduate after achieving over 30 hours of additional learning over the year.

I would like to commend all our students and families who have participated in this program and look forward to seeing this grow across the school in 2024. I thank Mrs Giulia Del Zoppo for all her work in making this program possible.

## **Carols In The Garden:**

I am very proud of our involvement and participation in the upcoming Carols In The Garden on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at Jarrett Memorial Gardens. To have our staff and students join together and perform at this community event is an outstanding effort and is another way which promotes our positive school identity and culture. I acknowledge Mrs Charnstrom and Mrs Guy for their outstanding commitment and organisation.



### Splash Day:

To reward our students for a wonderful year we will be providing free pool entry to students from Reception to Year 6. They are to be congratulated on their efforts throughout 2023 and commended on their overall behaviour, attitude and efforts. Information about swimming permission, parental assistance and times allocated have been included. Please return all information to your child's class teacher.

### End of Year Concert:

Our concert will be held on Thursday 14th December under our shelter. All details will be distributed very soon. Our community awards will be presented during the concert and we will recognise our leaving families. I encourage all parents/caregivers to come along and bring extended family to watch great performances by the students. I look forward to seeing you all there!

### End of Year Mass:

On Friday 15th December at 9.30am we invite all parents, family and friends to attend the End of Year Mass to celebrate the year and to farewell our Year 6 students. We will present our school based awards at this special gathering in our church.

### Prayers and Thoughts:

We continue to think about the conflict in Israel and Gaza and hope for a peaceful resolution. Our hearts are feeling for the humanitarian crisis that is evolving as we keep all those affected in our thoughts and prayers.

### Community Involvement

As mentioned, many times, I value our staff and students community involvement and embrace the many positive benefits this provides our school. I take this opportunity to wish our teacher Mrs Rachel McLeod all the best for her concert this weekend. We have over 50 students involved which will prove to be an amazing performance. I also acknowledge and thank Miss Dana Hansen and our other staff who are helping and supporting.

I hope that you can join us for all or some of our wonderful end of year events and celebrate the success and triumphs of your child.

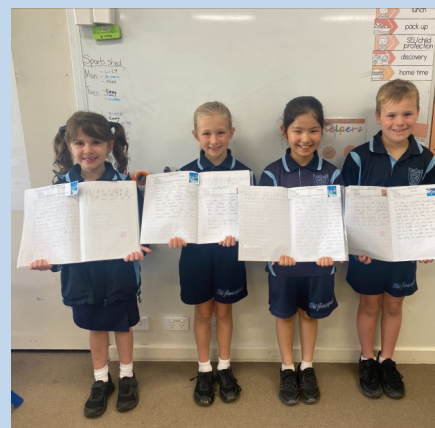
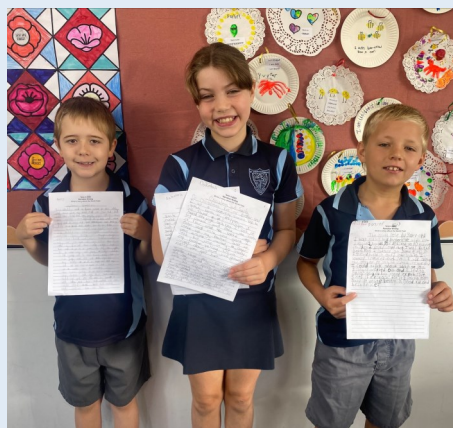
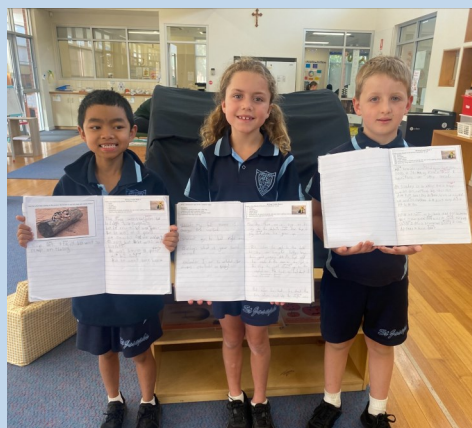
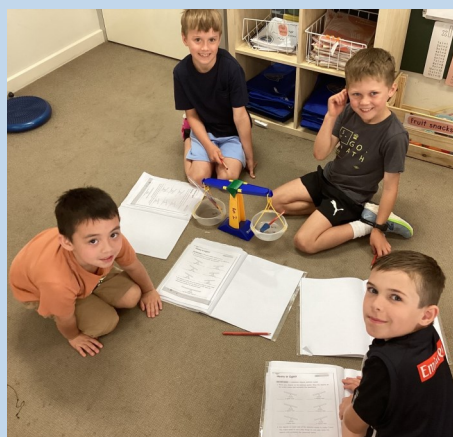
Regards  
Don DePalma  
Principal



## Leader of Learning:

This is an exciting time of the year where we witness and celebrate students' growth in their learning. Students are completing summative assessments, sharing their knowledge, skills and understandings with their teachers which is informing their grades and report comments.

Chrissie Grocke  
Leader of Learning



# Religious Identity & Mission:

## Advent:

We are very excited about the season of Advent and the many meaningful messages that can be used about our faith and how it relates to our everyday lives. Classes are enjoying learning about this special time in our liturgical year with creating the Advent wreath and Advent Calendar.

## Advent wreaths:

Traditionally the Advent wreath has 5 candles; three purple, one pink and one white in the middle.

On the first Sunday of Advent the first purple candle on the Advent Wreath will be lit. This candle is called the "Prophecy Candle" and represents hope or expectation in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

On the second Sunday of Advent, the second purple candle is lit. This candle represents love and is called the "Bethlehem Candle,".

On the third Sunday of Advent the pink candle is lit. This is called the "Shepherd's Candle" and it represents joy.

On the fourth Sunday the last purple candle, called the "Angels Candle," is lit. This candle represents peace.

On Christmas Eve, the white centre candle is lit. This candle is called the "Christ Candle".



## Parish Mass:

Mrs Hayes' Year 3/ 4 class led our Parish Mass at the church today. It was a beautiful mass followed by a lovely morning tea back at school. Thank you to Mrs Hayes and Mrs Guy for their work in preparing the students, Fr Emil for celebrating the Mass with us, the parishioners, parents and friends for their attendance and the students for all their preparation and faith leadership.



## ReLAT:

Our Year 4 students received their ReLAT results at the end of last week. This is an assessment of the basic content in the knowledge of our Crossways Religious Education curriculum. ReLAT complements the continuous, fuller, and deeper assessment of learning that occurs in the RE classroom. Please note that the assessment is not a measure of a child's faith nor their participation in the broader life of the Catholic community.

## Prayer Cards:

In the newsletter pocket today, we have included a prayer card for Peace in the Holy Land in light of the unfolding situation in Israel and Palestine. The cards have been produced by the Pope's own foundation "Aid to the Church in Need".

Chrissie Grocke  
REC



## Christmas Decorated Bike Competition

Monday 18th December 2023 at 10.00am

At St Joseph's School, Renmark

You must register online

<https://renmarkchristmaspageant.godaddysites.com/decorated-bikes>.

Come and join in the fun!!



## CHRISTMAS DECORATED BIKE COMPETITION



13yrs & under Boy/Girl

10yrs & under Boy/Girl

6yrs & under Boy/Girl





# Student Wellbeing:

## "Be Unique Be You Day"

This week we celebrated "Be Unique Be You Day". Being unique is a celebration of individuality and the essence of what makes each of us one of a kind. It's an acknowledgement that no two people are exactly alike, and it's in our difference that we find our greatest strength and beauty. All our students joined a buddy class for a fun activity followed by games and dancing with their buddies. It was a wonderful afternoon, and it was very rewarding watching all the students interacting and having fun. Our whole school contributed to creating a handprint mural which truly depicts uniqueness. This mural represents our school's inclusivity and acceptance of others. This lovely mural can be found displayed near the canteen.





# Religious Identity & Mission:

