



## Messages from Donny

Dear Parents, Students and Families,

Can you believe that we are just over half-way through Term 1. The first 6 weeks have flown by with many wonderful learning opportunities and strong relationships and connections being formed in classes. This week we were so proud to welcome our Director Ms Nichii Mardon and her leadership Team, including Dr Justin Matthews, Mary Manning and Geoff McManus. They visited all our classes and enjoyed the positive learning environment that we shared. They were supported by our Year 6 Leadership students, Archie Sutton and Mya Elliott, and our leadership staff, Mrs Tamara Hayes and Mrs Laura Sever.



Ms Nichii Mardon with Desmond



Many families enjoyed our EXPO evening.



### Lent -Choosing Kindness, Empathy and Compassion:

Last Wednesday, we celebrated a beautiful Ash Wednesday Liturgy to start the season of Lent. I was so proud of our students who showed outstanding respect and reverence, which was acknowledged by the staff and visitors. As a Catholic School this is a unique opportunity to foster a sense of kindness, empathy and compassion. Building this into our curriculum certainly adds to the extra learning experiences that we provide at St Joseph's. As we continue the journey through the season of Lent we reflect on how we are trying to make changes in our daily lives to become better people. As we have started the season of Autumn, leaves fall from the trees and the weather starts to get colder. It is a season of change. Let us take this opportunity during Lent to remind ourselves and our children about the changes we want to make for ourselves. At school, we have asked all our students to think of three main actions during Lent:

1. **Prayer** – Taking time to reflect, think of others, and consider how we can make a difference. – show care for the sick and elderly, empathy for those effected by war and violence, think of our local farmers, those less fortunate than ourselves etc.
2. **Fasting** – Giving up something meaningful as an act of sacrifice and self-discipline – chocolate, iPad time, gaming, soft drink etc
3. **Almsgiving** – Performing good deeds, help with the dishes, donating to Project Compassion, trying hard with Home Learning, doing chores without being asked, giving up canteen money to help those in need.





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

Fr Hau 0401 367 337  
8582 1894

### **MASS TIMES**

15 March Sat 6.30pm  
23 March Sun 9.00am  
29 March Sat 6.30pm  
5 April Sat 6.30pm

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **March**

- 10 Public Holiday
- 11 9.15am Assembly by  
1/2KV class
- 12 NAPLAN testing
- 17 St Patrick's Team  
celebration day
- 18 Board Meeting
- 19 St Joseph's Day
- 21 Harmony Day
- 25 Year 7 Camp
- 28 "Be Hopeful" Day

The challenge for us is to look deeper into our character and let go of something that might be preventing us from truly living Christ in action. I invite all of us during this time, to choose kindness, empathy and compassion instead of gossip, teasing, and put-downs. Let us, as a community, truly turn to our faith and to welcome all with open arms, open minds and open hearts. I encourage us to let go of the negative judgements that put a cloud over our loving hearts, and instead let us use this time to truly shine and be beacons of God's love.

### **A time to reflect on our prayers, thoughts, actions and attitudes:**

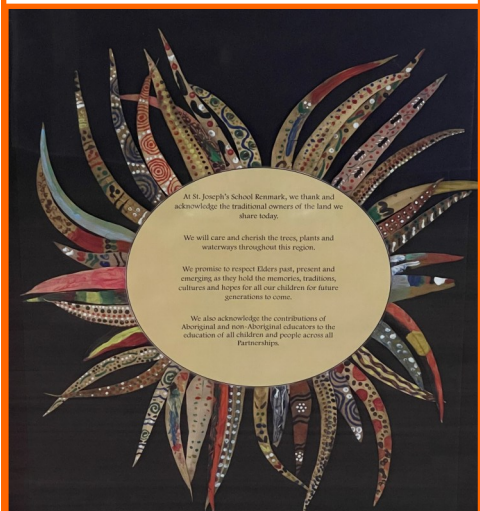
During this time of Lent we have been asked to think about those many children and their families who are less fortunate than us. We have also seen the devastation with the Queensland cyclone and are constantly reminded of the humanitarian disaster in Ukraine. We have encouraged our children to look deep in their hearts to show empathy, kindness and gratitude as they think about how lucky they are and how they can show care for others. These examples of social justice make us put things in perspective as we look at our own lives and situations.

### **Family Fete & Wellbeing Expo:**

I was filled with so much pride with the success of our Family Fete & Wellbeing Expo. I sincerely thank all the students, staff, Allied Health Services, community clubs and associations. With more than 700 people attending, we enhanced our community focus and highlighted the amazing school community that we are all privileged to be part of. I also acknowledge the amazing work of all our staff, in particular the Coordinators, Mrs Giulia Del Zoppo and Ms Linda Lawton.

## **Acknowledgement:**

At St Joseph's School we acknowledge our learning experiences take place on Erawirung country and pay respects to Traditional owners and Elders past and present.



**The winner of the P&F raffle  
on EXPO night was  
Ian McGregor -  
a RFDS volunteer!**

**All proceeds from the raffle  
were donated to RFDS.**

### **Children's University - 2025 Launch:**

Our students have the opportunity to again be involved in an exciting program: 'Children's University Australasia' (CUA). Mrs Del Zoppo is our Coordinator and recently had a very positive response from our students, with 33 students registering their interest. CUA aims to encourage high quality 'out of school hours' activities for children aged between approx. 8 and 14 years of age, engaging the wider community as learning partners in this process. The most important principles of CUA are that participation is voluntary and activities must take place outside the normal school day, during lunch, after school, weekends and holidays. Students choose what activities to do and when, and the learning always has a link to something they could do at a 'grown up' university.



In partnership with The University of Adelaide, we aim to raise aspirations and develop a love of learning by issuing students enrolled in CUA with a 'Passport to Learning,' which records their individual learning journey. To support this very valuable learning opportunity we subsidise the cost of registration. We look forward to sharing many positive stories and learning experiences.

### **Work Samples: SeeSaw**

As part of our reporting and assessment focus, your child's work sample will be sent home for you to view and acknowledge the learning and progress shown. This year we will use our Seesaw platform and parents are expected to comment and return feedback to class teachers.

### **Bullying & Harassment:**

The recent negative media exposure has highlighted that the issue of bullying and harassment continues to be a major focus in all schools. At St Joseph's we have a very proactive approach and continue to educate our students about bullying and harassment.

We use prevention, intervention and restorative justice practices. We promote positive inclusive behaviours and relationships, reflecting a culture that enables students to develop social and self-management skills.

In classrooms, we use our SEL lessons to explicitly teach our students about getting along and how to be kind and caring towards each other. It is important that students and families are aware of the differences between conflict, someone being mean, and bullying. We take bullying seriously and will follow up when a claim is made. However, many times, we discover it is a disagreement or a mean moment rather than bullying.

At St Joseph's we do look at bullying through the lenses of our Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum but we also use the **Bullying No Way** Kids website. This will be formally recognised later in

the year during National Day against Bullying on August 13<sup>th</sup> <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/ForKids>

### **Parent/Teacher Interviews:**

Included today with the newsletter is information about the upcoming Parent/Teacher interviews in Week 10. These meetings are an important element of the range of assessment and reporting strategies we use at school. They are a time for you to share any questions or concerns about your child's learning and wellbeing, an opportunity to celebrate their successes and hear about their learning progress.

This year we are again using our Online Booking System. Please refer to the note for all details about booking your time. Please see your class teacher if you have any problems or questions.

### **Data - Tracking Student Progress:**

With upcoming Parent/Teacher Interviews, teachers are preparing to share comprehensive data that will show the current progress of your child/ren. A component of teaching and learning is how we track the progress of each of our students. We have established a Reading Data Wall, whole school tracking system which has a profile on each student. We also use a variety of tools to assess and monitor progress including Classroom Pulse, NAPLAN, PAT R and PAT M, Spelling Test, Early Years Literacy Assessment, Probe, Observations, Videos, Work Books etc.

The Data on the My School Website indicates that we do very well comparatively with surrounding schools. We take pride in our learning environment and balance contemporary styles with basic explicit structures. We also have a high focus on Student Wellbeing with support for their social and emotional skills. Finally, we continue to find value in the continued development of traditional learning using handwriting and reading of books, but also acknowledge that our children need exposure to the many online learning opportunities.



### **Classroom Pulse 'Check In':**

Our families have previously received information about a Classroom Pulse 'Check In'. This is a wellbeing initiative introduced by CESA across every Catholic School in South Australia. This initiative has a strong strategic focus that aligns with the Living Learning Leading Framework. All our students completed the surveys over the last two weeks. This will provide valuable data to how they are feeling about daily school life, their friendships, learning and their connection with the school as a community. This feedback enables us to put additional processes, procedures and programs in place to better support students at school in terms of student learning and wellbeing. We are looking forward to reading the student feedback.

### **School Fees:**

We thank all families who have paid or have commenced contributions towards their school fees. We would like to inform families that there are many activities and events provided by the school for which there is no cost to families.

Some of these include:

- Updated IT devices such as iPad and Laptops.
- Year 6 Leadership Day bus and cost of Aquatic Day activities.
- Year 6 end of year celebration day.
- Support and subsidise all school camps and excursions such as Bush Discovery.
- Buses to SAPSASA events such as football, netball, basketball, swimming and athletics.
- Footsteps Dance program.
- Swimming Lessons and pool entry costs for all Year 3-6 students.
- Splash day pool hire and entry for all students.
- Discount for students with siblings attending St Francis of Assisi College.
- A subsidised portion of all class excursions and camps.

My special thanks go to Mrs Karen Trenwith who works diligently to balance the books and provide these things for students.

### **P&F/Wellbeing Meeting – Footy Tipping Competition:**

I wish to promote our upcoming P&F/Wellbeing gathering on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March. We will discuss some exciting ideas and events with coffee and cake (or alternatives) provided, and all are most welcome. I also take this opportunity to promote the P&F Footy Tipping Competition. This is a free activity with excellent prize money. See details outlined in this newsletter.

### **Exciting Progress in Literacy and Intervention Programs:**

We are thrilled with the progress of our new Literacy structures, which have laid a strong foundation for student growth and success. Alongside these developments, we have also seen the establishment of excellent Intervention structures, ensuring that all students receive the support they need.

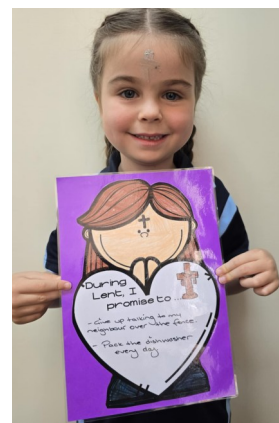
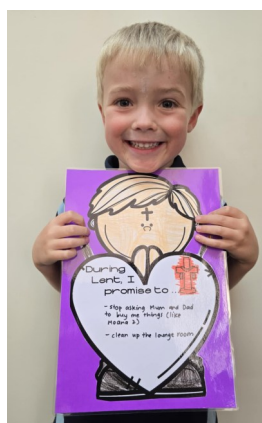
One of the most exciting additions is our new Extension Program – **GATEWAYS**. This initiative is designed to challenge and extend high-achieving students, providing them with enriching learning experiences. I congratulate our Leader of Learning, Kassie Charnstrom and our Intervention Coordinator, Kiara Lodge, for all their work in this area. We look forward to sharing more about the progress and success of these programs in the coming months!

### **SRC meeting:**

Our SRCs had their first meeting today. They outlined important aspects of their role and looked at planning their class meetings. They are busy thinking of ideas, activities, and events. I thank Mrs Amy Thompson for her initiative and support of the SRC students.

### **Thank You, Renmark High School:**

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Renmark High School for their fantastic collegiality and support in





running a series of coaching clinics for our students. The time, effort, and enthusiasm shown by both staff and students have been truly appreciated. A special thank you to Mr. Daniel Clark and Mr. Aaron Camplin for their leadership and dedication in making these clinics such a success. Their expertise and commitment provided our students with valuable learning opportunities and a great experience. We are grateful for our strong community connection with Renmark High School and look forward to continuing this positive partnership in the future. Thank you for a job well done!

### **Thank You Parents:**

Once again we have been blessed with special help from parents in many ways; Helping and cooking on Pancake Tuesday, P&F meeting, AGM, help with Literacy time, reading, swimming supervision, attendance at Assemblies and Masses, and much more. I sincerely thank all our community for their willingness to support our school and become involved. As mentioned many times, positive staff/parent/student relationships develop positive learning outcomes.

Our newsletter is filled with some fantastic photos which highlights the rich learning over the past two weeks but also highlights the very positive and vibrant community spirit that is alive and well at St Joseph's. I am always so appreciative of the many positive words of support and endorsement from parents, carers and visitors, and am so proud of the other dimensions of learning that is provided at St Joseph's. Above all else, it is always about the children and how we foster a positive and meaningful learning environment. We look forward to the next two weeks. Have a great long weekend. I'll see you all at Assembly on Tuesday at 9.15am.

Regards,  
**Don DePalma**  
**Principal**

## **SAPSASA Football:**

On Wednesday, students from Year 5 and Year 6 represented Renmark at the Riverland SAPSASA Football Carnival in Berri. The boys showed outstanding sportsmanship, skills, teamwork, and most importantly in the heat - resilience. They ended up winning 2 games and losing 2 (one of the games by 1 point!) Congratulations to Lawson Dring who was awarded runner-up MVP for the whole carnival. Thank you to Mr Paul Hooper who coached the Renmark Team and to the parents who supported in many ways.

**Jackson McGuire**  
**SAPSASA Co-ordinator**



Front: William Gilford, Max Jarvis, Olly Stoneham, Bailey Yard, Noah Albanese, Joel Stoeckel.  
Back: Casey Rover, Jett Lever, Daniel Latorre, Apollo Atsaves, Felix Zunic, Lawson Dring, Marlon Brown, Jack Hughes, William Petersen.



Thank you to Renmark High School for having our Year 6 students participate in some Athletic coaching clinics.



## **P&F News:**

### **Footy Tipping 2025:**

Round 1 starts this week! We invite all parents, family members and special friends to join our footy tipping competition for 2025. Prize money for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. URL: <https://tipping.afl.com.au/tipping/index.html#/comp/83628/about?code=RXZ4SFNE>  
Comp Code: RXZ4SFNE



SRCs met with Mrs Thompson today.



# Religious Identity & Mission:

## Shrove Tuesday:

We celebrated Shrove Tuesday this week with delicious pancakes made by members of our wonderful Parents and Friends committee. Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday. Lent – the 40 days leading up to Easter – was traditionally a time of fasting and on Shrove Tuesday, Anglo-Saxon Christians went to confession and were “shriven” (absolved from their sins). Traditionally during Lent, Christians would give up rich, tasty foods such as butter, eggs, sugar and fat (some Christians continue to do so, in fact). Shrove Tuesday was the last chance to eat them – and what better way to do so than with a delicious pancake!



## Ash Wednesday:

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the Christian season of Lent. Lent is a time when we pray, give up things we enjoy in order to give to others, and do kind things for other people as we prepare to celebrate the great feast of Easter. For forty days, we are asked to follow Jesus on his journey to Calvary. Despite his suffering, Jesus shows mercy and forgiveness to those who had sentenced him to his death. This powerful moment shows us the importance of both asking for forgiveness of God and showing forgiveness to others within our own lives. Students have created Lenten promises based on Fasting, Prayer and Almsgiving to uphold during this Lenten season.

On Ash Wednesday our Year 6 class represented the school at the Parish Mass with our local parishioners and then brought the ashes back to school where we held a liturgy where the rest of the school and students received Ashes from their teachers.

## Project Compassion:

Project Compassion, which is run by Caritas, is the major charity we support during Lent. It is based on Catholic Social Teaching principles. Their theme this Lent is *Unite Against Poverty!* Throughout Lent we learn about different people and communities that Caritas has helped. Project Compassion boxes with a flyer about what it is all about have gone home this week. This year, Project Compassion brings you the stories of three resilient people: Toefuata'iga from Samoa, Liam from Vietnam and Irene from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While from three different corners of the world and facing vastly different challenges, they are all united by one dream: to create a



better world for all future generations. This year during Lent, Caritas Australia invites you to put your compassion into action.

As individuals we can help others, but when we come together through Project Compassion, our good becomes great. Our combined kindness grows. And when we unite with each other – and with people living in poverty – we can create BIG, lasting change.

## Week 1:

The first story is about Toefuata'iga who is 13 years old who goes to a primary school in Samoa.

While Samoa is a beautiful country surrounded by water, Toefuata'iga's school didn't have access to enough clean water. When they ran out the teachers and students had to fetch water themselves in buckets from neighbouring homes who had access to piped water. This took time away from teaching and learning and on days with little or no water, students were sent home early, missing out on learning and playing with friends.



## Religious Identity & Mission:

Her school community, with Caritas's help were able to organise access and storage of clean water for the school community for drinking and washing hands to help them stay healthy.

### St Patrick's Day:

On Monday the 17<sup>th</sup> of March we will celebrate St Patrick's Day. Students in the team 'St Patricks' are invited to wear their green shirt instead of their school shirt to school for the day and bring a plate of food to share for afternoon tea (they could even bring green food). Throughout the week there will be teaching and learning about St Patrick as one of the Patron saints of our school.



### St Joseph's Day:

In Week 8 on Wednesday March 19th, we will celebrate one of the most important days in a Josephite school, St Joseph's Day. The Josephite charism permeates throughout all aspects of school life here at St Joseph's with students being guided to follow the vision and inspiration of our Patron Saint, St Joseph, and co-founder of the Sisters of St Joseph, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. To celebrate this day students will participate in a special whole school Mass, a sausage sizzle lunch generously prepared by our P&F and hopefully (weather permitting) the petting zoo and horse rides from our Expo.



Please note: Our St Joseph's sports team will not celebrate their team on this day but later in the year on the feast of St Joseph the Worker.

### Harmony Day

Harmony Day is the celebration that recognises our diversity and brings together Australians from all different backgrounds. It is about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. Our school will celebrate this important day on Friday 21st March. In classes students will learn about the meaning of this day and are encouraged to wear a splash of orange with their full school uniform. We will gather as a community in liturgy at 12.30 and after lunch our wonderful Year 6 students will run their Project Compassion stalls.



**Chrissie Grocke**  
**APRIM**

## Leader of Learning:

### Data Informed Practice:

Data informed practice describes the systematic use of data by schools and educators to improve student learning, specific instruction, classroom practices and overall wellbeing. In addition to data that teachers receive throughout the day by checking for students' understanding to inform instructional practice, we collect formal data on learning, attendance, wellbeing, and other family information. Throughout the year, student data is collected and analysed by staff to guide teaching and learning in our school. After our data is collected, it is then displayed on data walls, creating a strong picture for deep reflection, recognising strengths, opportunities, challenges, and areas of wonder. Our data supports us in continuing to build a culture of inquiry and growth in our school. Recently, students have completed the Classroom Pulse Survey, collecting data on their general wellbeing. This data will then be analysed, providing staff with insightful information, which will guide our actions to ensure all students feel safe and supported at school.

### G.A.T.E.WAYS:

We are excited to share that St Joseph's School Renmark has partnered with the G.A.T.E.WAYS team to deliver the 'Horizons - Tales as old as time' program to our students. We have experienced great success in implementing this intervention approach through a live video streaming platform. G.A.T.E.WAYS offers an accelerated learning pace, presenting content that challenges students, providing them with the opportunity to reach their full potential in a stimulating and supportive environment.

**Kassie Charnstrom**  
**LoL**





## 2/LH Class Page



LEARNING FUN IN 2LH ✨





# Family Fete & Wellbeing Expo

A big thankyou to everyone that braved the heat and supported our biannual Family Fete & Wellbeing Expo. We had over 700 people come along and enjoy the free activities and entertainment. We are grateful for all the exhibitors that dedicated their time to help make our event a great success. It was wonderful to see and hear everyone having a great time, and to smell the yummy food that filled the air. We are very fortunate to have a strong community and the Family Fete & Wellbeing Expo certainly showcased that at its best.





