

Star of the Sea Catholic College

Newsletter

7th February 2023

From the Principal

I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened. -

Mark Twain

*Attentiveness,
Hospitality
and
Compassion.*



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Watching the students arrive last Friday for the start of the 2023 school year at Star of the Sea, you could see the mixture of emotions on their faces. For some it was a sense of excitement about being back with friends, for others a sense of disappointment that the holidays had ended, and for others still, especially new students, there was a degree of nervousness about the unknown.

An oft-used quote from Mark Twain is, "I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened." When we think about it, it easily applies to all of our lives. We often worry about the future and what could happen, but the reality is that most of what we worry about never happens. But we don't often reflect on this. Instead, we start worrying about the next things that could possibly happen!

Talk to any teacher, especially high school teachers, and they will tell you that there seems to be a rise in the number of students who have anxiety over the past decade. Not only this, but there also seems to be a rise in anxiety in the general population. Some people will blame social media for this, others the state of the world, and others still will say that the amount of anxiety hasn't increased, it is just that we recognise it more now that people are prepared to talk about it more.

Whatever the case, it is worth reflecting on what we can do about it. A quick search on Google for "ways to overcome anxiety" will give around 164 million results (I didn't read them all) and they are suggestions that we hear regularly - exercise, relaxing or meditation, healthy eating, facing your fears. From a Catholic point of view, two of the strategies which can be helpful are "letting go and letting God."

When we "let go," we stop trying to be in control of everything. While having some control over our life and its direction is important, we need to be humble enough to realise we can't control everything that happens and that's okay. When we let go we allow ourselves to be more curious. Rather than worrying about what might happen, we become interested in what might happen and look forward to the future.

When we "let God" we remember that we are not in control, God is, and that God wants good things for us. The whole "sending my only Son to be crucified" thing was probably a waste of time if God didn't want good things for us. Those "good things" may not be what we expect, and could also possibly bring us grief and pain, but only through these experiences do we grow as human beings.

In our Star of the Sea Catholic community we will meet many people with anxiety, and just by saying "let go and let God" is unlikely to bring about any miraculous change in their levels of anxiety. Instead, each of us needs to reflect on our anxieties and be prepared to be curious once again, to look forward to the future with hope, and to realise that God only wants good things for us.

Richard Chapman, Principal



Star of the Sea Catholic College acknowledges the Leterremairener people as the traditional custodians of the land on which our school stands.

Religious Education and Faith Development

Feast of Saint Josephine Bakita

From Slavery to Freedom

Heart

Spirituality

Attentiveness



Hospitality

Compassion

Saint Josephine Bakita was the first black woman in the modern era to be canonised a saint. Her feast day is on February 8. She is the patron saint of Sudan, South Sudan and human trafficking survivors.

Bakita was born in Sudan in 1869 into a loving family. However, when she was eight, she was abducted and sold into slavery. She was forced to walk 960 kilometres and over her twelve years of slavery she was bought and sold five times. She was treated cruelly. Eventually she was the slave of the Italian vice-consul working in Sudan. She was the nanny to his children, and he treated her kindly. During her visit to Italy with the family she met the Canossian Sisters and learned about Jesus and Christianity. She refused to return to Sudan and was given her freedom in 1889. She was baptised in 1890 and became a Canossian Sister in 1896.

Saint Bakita never allowed the harshness she received from her captors to turn into negativity or a grudge. Through the kindness of the sisters, she learned that the deep peace that she had in her heart came from our loving God. Bakita shows us how to forgive those who hurt us and as patron saint of survivors of human trafficking, she calls for an end to slavery. Bakita's mind was always on God and her heart was always in Africa.

Recently Pope Francis visited South Sudan which he called 'a pilgrimage of peace.' Sudan has a large Catholic population, and it has suffered violent conflict since the end of its civil war. The Pope hopes his visit will revive its peace process. The Pope's message calls for an end to the suffering of the many displaced Sudanese people. May we join the Pope and Saint Bakita and pray for peace and unity in Sudan.



From the Parish

70th Anniversary

On Sunday 19th February the Star of the Sea parish will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the opening of the first Catholic Church in George Town (which stood where the Hall now is). There will be Mass at 11am in the Church followed by a shared lunch in the Hall with plenty of memorabilia and story-telling. All are welcome.



Sacraments

If you are interested in having any of your children receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist (First Communion) and/or Confirmation, the Star of the Sea Parish is ready to welcome you! You are invited to become part of a Catholic faith community and grow in a deeper relationship with God so we may become the people God calls us to be. Whilst there are no age barriers as to when children can be baptised into the Catholic Church, Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are usually received from about Grade 3 up.

If your child goes to Star of the Sea, please see Mrs Lynelle Davis to find out more.

If your child goes to another school, feel free to contact Father Bala (Parish Priest) on 0447498660 or 6382 1489.

First day back to Star of the Sea Catholic College 2023

First day back today! A great day (despite a fire alarm going off). Looking forward to a great year with the students of Star of the Sea.



Welcome

We welcome Sebastian, Lucas, Zhen, Axel, Lenny, Oliver, Ella, Mia, Lincon, Raymond, Aylah, Noah, Harrison (Kinder), Archie, Evie, John (Year 1), Oliver (Year 2), Matilda (Year 3), Ethan (Year 4), Alyssa, Coby, Erika, Hailey, Kaiden, Kara, Kobe, Pixie, Ruby, Shaeisha, Zachary (Year 7), Brianna, Lucy (Year 8), Mia, Shakiah, Jayden (Year 9) and their families to Star of the Sea. We hope they enjoy their time here.

We Keep in our Prayers

We keep in our prayers the family of Jane Lazdauskas, who died over the holidays. Jane leaves a husband and child who are both part of our Star of the Sea community.

*Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace. Amen.*

Congratulations

Congratulations to Mitch Clifford, one of our Teacher Assistants, and his wife Amanda, who became parents again over the holidays with the birth of Lucas.

Induction of College Leaders

Our Induction of College Leaders ceremony will be held on Wednesday 15th February in the church at 12pm. Families and friends are most welcome to join us.

Medical Information

It is necessary for us to keep the students' medical information up to date. Student Medical Background forms will be sent home with each student this week. If there have been any changes to your child's medical requirements, to which the school should be notified, please complete the form and return it to the school as soon as possible.

Dropping Off Students Reminders

Some reminders for all families for the start of 2023:

- When dropping off students, please do not park or stop on the yellow lines in William St as it blocks the view of the crossing for oncoming traffic and blocks the view of oncoming traffic for those using the crossing.
- Our school duty of care begins at 8:30am when we open the doors. For students who need to arrive before that time we would suggest that Primary students wait around the back near the Grade 1 classroom.

Staff Movements

Mr Steve Edwards has resigned from his role as Chaplain and will take up a teaching position at another school in 2023. We wish Mr Edwards all the best for his new role and he will certainly be missed here at Star of the Sea. Mr Edwards has been at Star of the Sea for a number of years in roles of both teaching and as Chaplain. The strong relationships he built with students and his care for all will certainly be missed.

Mr Mitch Clifford will finish with us next Wednesday as he takes up a Teacher Assistant role in a school closer to home. Although he has only been with us a short time, his friendly nature and his great work with the students have been of real benefit to the College. We wish him well in his new school!

Mrs Taylor and Mrs Radford will be away next Tuesday and Wednesday as they participate in InitialLit professional learning.

COVID Update

At the beginning of 2023, Star of the Sea is operating with the current COVID suggestions:

COVID-19 testing

- Students with respiratory illness symptoms should stay home and test for COVID-19. If the initial test result is negative and symptoms continue, staff and students are advised to take a second test the following day.
- Registration of positive tests, whilst no longer required, is recommended particularly for those persons who may wish to access health services such as COVID anti-viral treatments or COVID @home.
- We also encourage families to let the office know when their child has COVID so that we can keep track of it in the school.
- Staff and students who test positive for COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic can enter a school.

Colds and flu

Students with cold or flu symptoms should stay home and test using a rapid antigen test for two consecutive days. If the person tests negative on successive days for COVID-19 and their symptoms are mild e.g. a runny nose but no coughing or sneezing, then it is OK for the person to be at school.

RATs are available at the College office and we would encourage all families to have some at home.

College Newsletter

Our College newsletter comes out every Tuesday during term time. It is distributed via Compass and our College Facebook page, whilst a hard copy is provided to the youngest siblings in the Primary school. We also provide hard copies for our secondary students to pick up outside the office should they want to take one home, along with any parents or carers.

Rather than overloading our families with too much information in the first week (!), we will use future newsletters to provide further important information, like who to contact around the school and our strategic priorities for this year.

Communication Across the Community

Star of the Sea Catholic College uses the following methods to communicate information to our community:

Compass - this is our primary method of communication to families. Messages, letters home, reports and attendance are all maintained through Compass. All families should have access to Compass. Please contact the office should you need your password reset. For parents new to the College, a letter will be posted home to families in regards to Compass, including App setup and passwords.

Newsletter - this is mainly used to communicate upcoming events and general notices to our families and the broader community, along with keeping the community up-to-date with what is happening at our school.

Facebook - our Facebook page is mainly used to keep the community up-to-date with the great things happening around our school. It is used very rarely to send notices, unless those notices affect people outside the school community.

Hard Copies of letters home - we are trying to reduce the number of hard copies of letters to go home as we strive to become more sustainable. It will only be on rare occasions that the school sends home hard copies of letters, as most of this type of communication will be conducted through Compass.

Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday is fast approaching (February 21st) and, as is tradition, we hope to be able to provide our students with pancakes. If there are any parents or friends who would like to help with this, please contact the office. The day usually runs from about 8:50am to 12:30pm with lots of pancake cooking in the College kitchen.

SetUp for Success

Our early learning program, SetUp, is back in 2023 and will begin on Wednesday 15th February. It is on every Wednesday during term time between 9:00am and 10:30am in the Kinder room and is for children from birth to 5 years of age. It is completely free and all are welcome. Mrs Trudy Hoffman will run the first SetUp for the year, then Mrs Selina Taylor will take over for the rest of the year.



2023 School Dates

Term One:

Term 1 Concludes: Thursday 6 April 2023

Term Two:

Students Resume: Wednesday 26 April 2023

Term 2 Concludes: Friday 7 July 2023

Term Three:

Students Resume: Tuesday 25 July 2023

Term 3 Concludes: Friday 29 September 2023

Term Four:

Students Resume: Tuesday 17 October 2023

Students Conclude: Thursday 14 December 2023



Term 1 - 2023	
Wednesday 15th February	Induction of College Leaders in the Church at 12:00pm
Tuesday 21st February	Shrove Tuesday
Wednesday 22nd February	Ash Wednesday
Tuesday 28th February	Andrew Chinn visit
Friday 3rd March	Clean Up Australia Day
Monday 13th March	Eight Hours Day (Public Holiday)
Wednesday 15th March	NAPLAN begins
Monday 20th March	Circle of Life classes begin (Primary)
TBC	Star of the Sea Swimming Carnival (Grades 3 - 10)
TBC	Star of the Sea Athletics Carnival (Grades 3 - 10)
Monday 27th March	TPSSA Athletics Carnival
Thursday 30th March	NHSSA Div. 3 Athletics Carnival (TBC)
Tuesday 4th April	Caritas fundraiser
Wednesday 5th April	Year 7 Immunisations—Gardasil—Boostrix
Thursday 6th April	Holy Thursday
	Term 1 ends, End of Term Assembly