



Issue No. 5

4 March 2010

Dear Parents and Carers

A lot of time and energy is spent in schools, and workplaces for that matter, formulating policies and procedures around bullying as it presents in various forms. This is entirely as it should be. Ultimately, bullying of any kind either among students or adults is about an abuse of power that impacts most significantly on those who are marginalised or disenfranchised from the “main” for whatever reason, but most commonly because “victims” are in some way different. In Catholic schools we commit to a very public and unambiguous preference for the “poor” and the marginalised.

In last Saturday’s *Sydney Morning Herald* there was an instructive piece written by *Adele Horin* titled; “*Stop giving stick to those on disability, wield baton on bosses*”. The article refers to plans by the federal opposition “to further toughen eligibility rules for the disability pension” by requiring disability pensioners to “attend compulsory annual medical reassessments, and twice yearly chats about getting work”. The article goes on to make the point that the proportion of workers with a disability employed in the public service has fallen from 6 per cent around a decade ago to 3.6 per cent currently. The poignant message of the article was the following; “compulsion should be a two way street. Any government that compels people with serious health problems to get a job should also compel employers to hire them.....if anyone needs the stick, it’s those who hold the key to jobs”

It is a significant challenge of leadership not to be distracted from attending to the legitimate rights of those less equipped to represent themselves by instead catering to the wishes of the most powerful, the most influential or the most boisterous. That is the easy option and good leadership rarely involves easy options. Most often, it requires conviction and courage to represent what is fair and just, as opposed to what is popular and expedient. There are endless stories in the Gospel of how *unpopular* Jesus was because of his preference for the poor and marginalised and because he had the courage to do what was *right* rather than what was *accepted*. The parable of the *Good Samaritan* challenges us in this very way.

The period of Lent is an ideal time to be in solidarity with those who, for a raft of reasons, are marginalised from mainstream society and therefore have less of a voice in the world. And how enriching is it to share an act of kindness with a friend, colleague or neighbour that in some way either eases their burden, if only temporarily, or brightens their day. It is only through knowing the pain of suffering and sorrow that we can fully appreciate the joy of happier times. Soon we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday but not before we recall the suffering of his death. This was the message of last Sunday’s Gospel reading.

These are simple tenets of living and of building community but unless each of us accepts responsibility for nurturing this kind of community, we will all be diminished if only the strong have a voice.

In other news around Mater Dei, you would be aware that we have commenced a sport program of a Friday morning for both Primary and Secondary. Children will rotate through dance, gymnastics, soccer and T-Ball through the year. I am sure this will add another important dimension to the learning program for our students. Thank you to Mrs Hanrahan and Mrs Andersen who are leading this initiative.

The school canteen has returned for 2010 of a Friday morning. This is a very popular service for both staff and students and particular thanks to Diane Beers, Tanya Leadbeatter, Kirsty Weatherly, Sally Foweraker, Anne Adam, Mary Mackinnon, Trish Faint, Flora Fitzpatrick and Nora Akkary for their work in making this happen.

Prayers and best wishes

Tony Fitzgerald, CEO/Principal

MATER DEI PEACE EGG
REMINDER

All PEACE EGG order forms must be returned by Thursday March 11.

Dear Parents & Carers

Whilst students have been busily involved in their regular learning activities this week they have also been attending to several important additions to their weekly timetable.

On Thursday, everyone gathered in the newly renovated Hall to attend a special "Thank You" Assembly for the workmen who have become an extension of the Mater Dei School team this Term. Matt and Andrew were our guests and the students enthusiastically thanked the gentlemen for their hard work over the last few weeks that has resulted in such noticeable changes to Mater Dei.

Matt and Andrew were each presented with a Mater Dei coffee mug and *PEACE EGG* from our students to always remind them of their inclusion in the Mater Dei community and to show our appreciation of their professional approach to their work, response to our requests and their cooperation at all times. Our students also sang their favourite song, "The Face of God", for Matt and Andrew before standing for the National Anthem to conclude very significant Assembly.

On Friday, we turned our attention to Mater Dei's annual "Clean Up Australia Day" activities and each class grouping selected a particular section of the playground to clear away any rubbish that may have escaped from the bins. Stewardship is one of the essential aspects of being a Good Samaritan School and the Stewardship Award is keenly received by one class grouping at each week's Assembly as we are reminded that God has asked us to care for every aspect of our land, rivers, sea and air as responsible citizens in our communities and indeed of the whole world.

Kerrie Borthwick, Mater Dei School's Registered Nurse, has asked me to bring two important matters to the attention of our families.

Free vaccination for Swine Flu only is currently available from your local GPs.

We have been advised by the Department of Health that the predominant strain of flu virus this season is expected to be Swine Flu. At the end of March this year the Flu Vax for this season will contain a component of Swine Flu as well as two strains believed to be prevalent this season. The flu season is expected to hit earlier this year at the end of March.

Swine flu can be mild or long and debilitating. It is strongly advised that people at high risk, those with pre-existing health issues, seek vaccination. It is also advised that families discuss the vaccination with their local health professionals.

Students who present with active cold and flu symptoms at school during the coming months will be referred to the care of their parents/carers.

2010 Students' Vaccination Program

Each year NSW Department of Health offers the vaccines recommended by the national Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for adolescents as part of the school-based program. In 2010 the following vaccines will be offered:

- ◆ Hepatitis B and Varicella (chicken pox) vaccines in a catch-up program for all Year 7 students who may have not previously received three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine when they were a baby or had chicken pox
- ◆ Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine will be offered to Year 7 girls only as a three-dose course over a six month period, and
- ◆ Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (whooping cough) will be offered to all Year 10 students.

Dates for these Vaccinations are:

Year 7

12 March Hepatitis B and HPV 1st dose
18 May dtpa (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) and HPV 2nd dose
22 Oct Hepatitis B, HPV 3rd dose and Varicella (Chicken Pox)

Year 10

12 March dtpa

These dates are subject to change due to the workload of the visiting nurses but parents will be informed via the Newsletter if any changes occur.

Parent Information Kits will be sent out in the week preceding the clinic and we recommend that you read these documents carefully. To consent to the vaccination of your child complete the Consent Form and return to school promptly. If you do not wish to have your child vaccinated or they do not need the vaccination please cross the front of the envelope, write "NO" and return to school so we are aware that every child's family has received the document and made an informed decision about these vaccinations.

No vaccination will be given without the signed Consent Form being returned to school. A Record of Consent will be sent home to families on the day of the vaccinations. Please keep this Record of Consent somewhere safe once it has been provided. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact Kerrie Borthwick RN on 4654 8725.

As Week 6 comes to a close and the weather begins to cool, we remind all families that students will return for Term II wearing their Mater Dei School Winter uniforms so perhaps you will need to check these uniforms over the holidays.

Girls will wear their tartan dresses and thick grey stockings, OR white Mater Dei School blouse with tartan toggle, navy slacks and white socks and black shoes.

Boys will wear their white long sleeved shirts and tartan tie, grey socks and black shoes.

All students will wear their navy Mater Dei School jumpers, vests and jackets and Mater Dei School hat or cap.

I wish everyone a great weekend and safe travel if you are on the roads.

With peace to your and your family,
Pamela Templeton, Assistant Principal

Canteen Corner

Just a reminder that due to the building works, the Canteen cannot offer any counter sales at the moment.

Please make sure that all recess items and lunch time ice blocks and ice creams are pre-ordered.

Counter sales will resume once the new hall has been completed.

Thank you.

Diary Dates

Fri 12 March – Year 8 & Year 10 Injections

Mon 15 March – Mater Dei Golf Day

Tues 23 March – 2011 Enrolment Information Day @ 11.30 am

Wed 24 March – Mater Dei Peace Eggs go on sale

Fri 26 March – Swimming Carnival

Thurs 01 April – Holy Thursday – Morning Tea @ 10.30 am followed by Stations of the Cross @ 11.30 am – End of Term I

Protest Bus to Canberra

Dear Parents

A group of parents and children from St Lucy's Special School and other Special Schools will head to Canberra on Thursday 18 March to protest the decrease in funding to non government special schools. They wish to highlight the need to raise awareness with Governments and bureaucrats of the fragile economies of the non-government special schools and the consequences to society if funding is not protected.

The group of parents and children plan to march from old Parliament House to new Parliament House, to stage a brief concert, and then march back to old Parliament House for a lunch, and then to take the children to Questacon. The Brumbies will join them and they are also in discussion with other celebrities to be part of the event.

The organisers will work to make it a very happy, peaceful and respectful experience.

A delegation will also meet with the Shadow Ministers for Education and Disability and the organisers are also currently working to arrange a meeting with officers from Julia Gillard's and Bill Shorten's office.

The organisers are hiring a bus for the day and there may be room for others to join so if you would like to participate in this important venture can you please contact the Mater Dei Office for more information.



LADIES LIPSTICK LUNCHEON

Friday, May 14, 2010

Sponsorship packages available now. \$600 table of 10

—organize your table today

Contact Lee or Debbie

Development Program – 46557481 or

www.materdei.org.au

The next P&F meeting will be held on
Monday 22 March 2010.

This will be the Annual General Meeting
of the P&F.

Please mark your diaries for this very
important event.

EVERYONE WELCOME

Building work continues...

The photo below shows the site where the school building was demolished. This is where the new school will be built. In the background on the left is the site of the new school hall.



SCHOOL AWARDS

Academic

<i>Kinder Purple</i>	<i>Bailey Smith</i>
<i>Kinder Red</i>	<i>Mitchell Anthony</i>
<i>Primary R</i>	<i>James Moss</i>
<i>Primary G</i>	<i>Rickardo Martinez</i>
<i>Primary S</i>	<i>Bethany Raymond</i>
<i>Primary K</i>	<i>Christopher Vassallo</i>

Citizenship

<i>Kinder Purple</i>	<i>Toby Jordan</i>
<i>Kinder Red</i>	<i>Clare Marsh</i>
<i>Primary R</i>	<i>Sarah Vassallo</i>
<i>Primary G</i>	<i>Matthew Hunter</i>
<i>Primary S</i>	<i>Eliza Madeley</i>
<i>Primary K</i>	<i>Isabella Nolan</i>

Principal's Awards *Amie McClymont, Alicia Brylewski*

Uniform Awards *Ella Schaefer, Nathan Donoghue, Mathew Siciliano, Stefan Males, Ellen McCabe, Daniel Prout.*

Taxi Awards *Harrison Hines.*

Swimming Awards *Jye Cooper, Jacob Celan, Breanna Durrant, Harrison Hines, Stephanie Hamid, Dayna Myers, Nicholas Pithio, Joseph Gurnett-Attard, Adriana Gattellari, Paige McCue –Shore.*

Stewardship Award *Primary G.*



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