Dear Parents, Students and Friends of St Ambrose,

**Enhancing the Learning and Play Environment**

This week, further work has been undertaken in planning for the enhancement of a number of curriculum areas with particular focus upon numeracy and science. If you haven’t yet picked up the vibe, you certainly will as the year progresses given the resources and attention to professional development in these two areas.

Currently we are applying for a capital loan from the Catholic Development Fund to cover the total costs associated with the installation of a new Senior Adventure Playground and Food Tech facility.

The Grade 5 & 6 students have been pivotal in developing a design brief from which several companies have put forward their proposal. The location of the new playground will occur between the presbytery fence and football posts. Our aim is to have it installed during the next term holidays. Funds raised through the carnival will greatly supplement the costs of this initiative.

Food tech will occur out of the current canteen whilst utilising the space available in the art room to undertake hands on activities.

We, as a community, are very fortunate to have so many talented & skilled parents who are able to assist us in making these initiatives become a reality.

**Celebrating Mother’s Day**

A special Mother’s Day Celebration has been organised by our mums for Friday 6th May 2016. Like last year, it is a great opportunity to have a girl’s night out, be amongst friends and meet many more. An invitation has been sent to all mums via CareMonkey. We truly hope you’ll have the chance to be part of this very special night.

**Are You Here Next Year?**

As the school continues to have a high number of requests for placement into next year’s program, we ask that if your child is not attending St Ambrose next year that you please let us know ASAP. This will allow us to ensure other families do not miss out.

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**NEWSLETTER NO.11**
**THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2016**

**Dates & Events**

- Fri 22nd Apr: Emergency Displan Practice
- Mon 25th Apr: Anzac Day – Gather at 11.15am
- Wed 4th May: Mother’s Day Stall
- Fri 6th May: Mother’s Day Dinner
- Tue 10th May: NAPLAN – Gr 3 & 5
- Wed 11th May: NAPLAN – Gr 3 & 5
- Thu 12th May: NAPLAN – Gr 3 & 5
- Fri 13th May: Family Bush Dance
- Wed 18th May: Grade 6 Camp Information Night

**Congratulations to all our students who participated in this year’s Cross Country Run that was held at Hanging Rock. You all made us proud!**
ANZAC Day March – The school will be closed this coming Monday however, we would like to invite our students and parents to join us as we participate in the ANZAC Day March that occurs down the main street of Woodend. As a school community, we will be gathering at 11.15am for an 11.30am start in front of the ‘Double 8 Chinese Restaurant’ in the main street. Children will march in set groups with families observing from the sidelines, meeting us at the RSL. Students should be dressed in full school uniform.

School Uniform Survey – We take pride in the appearance of our students and our uniform; it represents to the community who we are. As uniforms are compulsory, we would like to ensure that parents are receiving value for money and are happy with how their children are presented at school. Following discussion raised at the School Advisory Committee Meeting last term, we would like to receive feedback in relation to what you think of the current uniform in order to determine whether new suppliers or some uniform redesign is required. A Uniform Survey went home with last week’s newsletter. Thank you for those who have responded and we still hope to hear from those who have not.

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
I give you a new commandment: love one another.

When Judas had gone Jesus said:
‘Now has the Son of Man been glorified, and in him God has been glorified.
If God has been glorified in him, God will in turn glorify him in himself, and will glorify him very soon.
My little children, I shall not be with you much longer.
I give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, you also must love one another.
By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.’

The word *love* has to be the most misused word in our language. We often say we love our house, our car, our holiday or even ice cream. Then we use exactly the same word to describe our feelings for our spouse, family, friends or children. If language is a window into meaning, then we are in strife at the loose way we transfer the same word for vastly different feelings and realities. At least I hope we feel differently about people over possessions. The way some people go on about their car, pets or money we begin to wonder.
The love Jesus encourages us to have in today’s Gospel is a very particular love. He tells us not
just to love one another, but to ‘love as I have loved you’. The core of Jesus’ love for us is sacrificial love, where he laid down his life that we might live. While love is a popular word, and even more popular notion, in our music, film, art and literature, sacrificial love is not something we hear much about these days or that we embrace very easily. Loving someone in the popular imagination has come to mean hanging in there until someone better comes along, or we grow bored of each other sexually or personally. Often it entails keeping the exit door on commitment nice and handy for the quick get away. But this hardly describes a love that involves sacrifice. Sacrificial love is demonstrated in deeds not words. It states that there is no point in saying we love anyone unless our actions follow the profession we make. Sacrificial love is not just about warm and fuzzy feelings; it is an intensely practical affair where our love is judged by our gentleness, kindness and patience with each other. Christian love is not arrogant or rude, it does not drag other people down, but rejoices and weeps when others are successful or downhearted. Loving as Jesus has loved means telling the truth with compassion, forgiving, working at trust and holding on to faith in the face of difficult times. Jesus does not promise us that this commandment is easy, just necessary if we are to love as he loves us.

While sacrificial love demands of us that we die unto self, Jesus never asked us to ‘kill’ ourselves. The distinction matters. All too often the Church has been guilty of giving out this teaching in a way that people thought they should put up with violent, undignified and soul-destroying behaviour from their spouse, children, parents, family or friends. Sacrificial love is never destructive. It is a free gift where we sometimes forego other options, opportunities and even good things for a love and life that is even better. The Lord laid down his life for us and in turn the Father raised him up to a glorified life. What’s true for him is true for us. We lay down our lives for each other so we can take up a new and richer life. We are never meant to destroy ourselves or stay in relationships that rip our dignity from us. Sometimes the most Christian thing we can do is to set up boundaries or make decisions that protect ourselves from behaviour which is neither loving nor Christian.

May this Eucharist then grant us the wisdom to love people and not things. May it help us embrace sacrifice in a way that leads to life and may it give courage to sort out the relationships that affirm our dignity and help us grow in faith, hope and love. © Richard Leonard SJ


Interschools
Equestrian Team

Imogen, Tara and Annique represented St Ambrose at the North Eastern Interschool’s Equestrian Challenge at Tatura on the weekend. The girls placed 8th out of 32 teams which was an amazing effort with only three members instead of four. Imogen was fortunate to win the overall primary school high point award.

Over the school holidays Imogen also presented St Ambrose at the Victoria State Equestrian Interschools Championships at Werribee Park. With close to 500 kids competing, Imogen’s placings have positioned her as the reserve rider for 3 events to represent Victoria at the National Championships in Sydney later in the year.

Well done girls (and mums!)

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

23 March   Max S (P/1R)
29 March   Buster C (P/1E)
13 April   Patrick C (1/2B)
18 April   Oran C (P/1E)
19 April   Sakura B (5/6B)
19 April   Yuki B (5/6P)
27 April   William B (P/1R)
On Monday, Grade Prep/One E were treated with a special visit from Jordan's dad, Patrick. Patrick is an Australian Border Patrol Officer who works away 4 weeks at a time in order to keep our country safe. The children were able to see photos of the big ship Patrick works on and all the equipment he uses. There were plenty of opportunities for many questions throughout the presentation and we all learnt a great deal.

At the conclusion of the talk, the children were lucky enough to receive their own special badge.

I'd like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to Patrick for sharing his knowledge and experience to enhance the learning in our classroom.

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Why Kids Need To Rote Learn Times Tables

Written by Elana Benjamin

(This article has been provided to get you to think of your own experience and expectations for your child. At St Ambrose, we strongly encourage the learning of times tables, alongside a rich maths learning environment. Our aim is not for students to recite maths facts mindlessly but to provide them with deep understanding and the tools to feel confident in addressing real life problems in the future.)

Rote learning is out of vogue. That was the message I took home from a recent maths information night at my children's primary school. And it cemented my concerns about the current approach to teaching some basic arithmetic.

The new Kindergarten to Year 6 maths syllabus for the Australian curriculum - became compulsory in 2015. Its emphasis is on depth of learning; for students to truly grasp mathematical concepts rather than applying them without understanding.

I've already noticed this move away from rote learning. Instead of memorising basic addition (say, 5+8=13), children are now taught to use strategies like 'counting on' and 'bridge to ten' (solving the question of 5+8 now involves two steps: 8+2=10; 10+3=13). But there's a
casualty in this swing towards 'deep learning': primary schoolers no longer memorise times tables. Times tables are so passé that they've even acquired a new name: they're now called *multiplication facts*.

Like other Gen X-ers, I spent many primary school mornings chanting numbers in unison with my classmates ("three ones are three; threes twos are six"). It was hardly inspiring. But I went on to study the highest level of maths at school, did a couple of semesters of university maths, and tutored junior and senior maths for years.

Times tables are a fundamental building block of arithmetic. When kids move beyond basic multiplication to more advanced topics, such as short division (what's 4872 divided by 6?) and reducing fractions (what's 3/8 of 56?), they're going to struggle if they can't automatically identify a product and its factors. It's what Sal Khan, founder of the not-for-profit online school the Khan Academy, refers to as "Swiss cheese learning" – gaps in knowledge that keep building because of things students have previously missed. [Source: Salman Khan, *The One World Schoolhouse: Education Reimagined*, 2012, Hachette Australia]

Yet, as a Sydney primary school teacher (who wished to remain unnamed) commented, "Although the expectation is that students will know their times tables by Year 5, many don't. Drilling *multiplication facts* with students and using worksheets for practice is now frowned upon and seen as lazy teaching."

Clearly, there's no purpose in endless memorisation without an understanding of underlying concepts. But rote learning has its place. It's akin to an exasperated parent occasionally answering a child's "But why do I have to?" with a curt "Because I told you so". Although rote learning times tables isn't fun or exciting, it works.

I can think of many things I'd rather do than practice *multiplication facts* with my Year 4 daughter. That's why I send her to school. But earlier this year, I realised she was struggling with foundation multiplication. So I worked with her at home to memorise time tables – using bribery to ensure compliance – until she was confident. I'm not the only parent supplementing the school curriculum.

I was shocked when, some time ago, I discovered that many parents at our local primary school send their children for extra maths coaching on precious weekday afternoons and Saturday mornings. These aren't kids with learning disabilities. Their parents aren't seeking to turn their darlings into future Maths Olympiad participants. These are families that simply want to plug the holes in their kids' maths knowledge. And as proficiency increases, mums and dads have noticed their kids developing a more positive attitude towards maths.

Similarly, my home-schooling project with my daughter brought an unexpected result: not only has she nailed her times tables, but her motivation and confidence in her maths prowess have skyrocketed.

That's why it's so important for primary schoolers to become proficient at numeracy from an early age. Perception of ability is crucial, and a child's belief that 'I'm not good at Maths' can soon become a self-fulfilling prophecy. As Sal Khan (drawing on the work of Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck) points out, "Most people are held back not by their innate ability, but by their mindset." [Source: https://www.khanacademy.org/youcanlear nything]

This is particularly true for females - at least until the boys-are-better-than-girls-at-maths myth is completely dispelled. Indeed, research shows that girls with the same level of maths ability as boys still rate their maths skills as lower. [Cordelia Fine, *Delusions of Gender: The
Primary school maths lessons have discarded the 'drill and practice' method in favour of making 'rich connections'. But drilling and practicing – especially when it comes to times tables – should not be seen as dirty words. Rote learning basic arithmetic frees up mental space so that kids can move onto deeper problem solving. Parents of primary school children shouldn't have to resort to outsourcing – or insourcing – to ensure their sons and daughters are competent in basic maths. The fact that many of us do indicates that the current approach isn't working.

Read more:

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**WANTED**

**WOOL AND CROCHET HOOKS**

*FOR 1/2B PLEASE.*

*PLEASE DROP THEM INTO 1/2B (ROOM 7)*

**ART MATERIALS**

The junior students are creating some 3D aboriginal inspired artworks and require at least 90 cardboard inner rolls from cling wrap, baking paper, foil and postage tubes. No toilet rolls please. Please pop any donations into the Art room.

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**Library News**

Lots of new and exciting books have arrived for the start of Term 2, looking for assistance to get them all covered and on the shelves to be enjoyed. Come join us on Tuesday mornings from 9:00am-10:00am or if you would prefer you could take a little bundle home and return when they are done. Contact Annie or Sandy for more information.

Scholastic Book Club Order forms have gone home, due date for ordering is Monday May 2nd. Thanks again for your support!

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**Mick Thomas**

(WEDDING PARTIES ANYTHING)

SATURDAY 28 MAY

DOORS OPEN 7PM

SPECIAL GUESTS CACARTU ST AMBROSE HALL WOODEND

TICKETS $25

trybooking.com/kzkq

All proceeds go to the Woodend Junior Football and Netball Club

THIS IS A LICENSED SHOW. NO BYO.
School Assembly Awards

P/1E  Leo G
For writing a great sentence in Writing time!
P/1R  Saila H
For being able to read lots of new words in her books.
P/1R  Lachlan B
For always sharing interesting comments during our class discussions.
1/2 B  Aulani B
For settling in to 1/2 B and making lots of new friends.
1/2 B  Aidan W
For great Reading - using expression and working out difficult words.
2/3R  Thomas N
For recognition of the great effort he puts into completing his homework.
Well done Thomas!
2/3R  Maie B
For an awesome visual & verbal recount of her N.Z.holiday.
3/4F  Liam C
For his thoughtful and caring attitude toward others!
3/4F  Faith Z
For always putting in that little bit extra into her school work. Well done!!
3/4R  Amelie C
For her terrific effort collecting and presenting data. Well Done!
3/4R  Kaleb Z
For presenting excellent arguments persuading his class to use public transport!
5/6B  Ninna H
For helping Miss Briggs to create a fabulous classroom display!!
Thank you Ninna!
5/6B  Aimee P
For her contagious smile and willingness to always lend a helping hand in the classroom!
5/6M  Molly G
For her well planned persuasive written piece on “The Blues are the AFL Team”
5/6M  Riley G
For his outstanding contribution to all class discussions.
5/6P  Jay B
For working hard in all areas of study.
5/6P  Cora O’Hare
For always being a willing helper in class.

Sports Star of the week - William M
For his excellent overarm throw in pyramid dodge ball!

Canteen NEWS!
The ladies in the canteen do a fantastic job, cooking and baking delicious food which we can smell some days throughout the school. To help them with their job when writing a lunch order please write:

1. Child’s name and grade clearly
2. Item/s required
3. Total
4. Amount of money enclosed
5. Change required, if any

(see photo below)

Please also note: Clear snap lock bags, sticky tape and staples are unacceptable.

Please remind your child to pick up milk drinks/slushies and other frozen drinks if pre ordered, fruit juices will be placed in lunch order tubs but not LOL's.

If your child would like a milk drink/cookie at recess they can pay across the counter or either write “RECESS” on the bag if placing through their lunch order. This way we won’t get confused and we’ll endeavour to make sure your child receives their snack at recess.

John Brown 5/6 P
1 x Meat Pie $1.50
1 x LOL $2.20
1 x Slushie $1.00
$6.70 enclosed
60c change
A Celebration Day for Girls

May 2016
Woodend - Sunday May 1st
Riddells Creek - Sunday May 15th

For more information:
www.celebrationdayforgirls.com or

OLMC Heidelberg

Please join us for our annual fundraiser benefiting

Mercy Works

featuring

Sr Alice Mackinnon RSM AM
Mercy Works Executive Director
and
Amanda Leonard
Head of Student Welfare at Catholic College Bendigo and Mercy Works placement in Timor Leste

Wednesday 8th of June, 7.00pm
OLMC Abe’s Staff Lounge
Cape St, Heidelberg

Catering provided by OLMC ‘So Quiche’ Catering

All funds raised support Mercy Works

Tickets:
$25 Adults
$15 Students

Bookings close by June 8 2016
Book at Trybooking.com and search OLMC or https://www.trybooking.com/18678
Enquiries: mercyworks@mercy.org.au

Macedon Ranges
Cancer Support Group

This group will be held on the last Wednesday of the month. It is specifically for anyone with a diagnosis, their families and carers, and will begin on...

Wednesday 27 April 2016
1pm to 3pm

Macedon Ranges Health
5 Neal Street, Gisborne

The program will be built around the needs identified by group members and will include presentations, speakers and group discussion.

For enquiries and RSVP’s please call June on 0412 054 089
or email Jenny at committee.rrwcc@gmail.com

It Takes a Village Compassionate Communities Inc.
and
Macedon Ranges Health
MT MACEDON ANZAC DAY
DAWN SERVICE
MONDAY 25TH APRIL 2016 AT 6AM

BUSES OPERATING FROM:

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<td>4:15AM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5:15AM</td>
<td>Gisborne Train Station</td>
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<td>Woodend to Dawn Service</td>
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Lancefield to Dawn Service via Romsey

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<td>5:00AM</td>
<td>Romsey-Community Hub</td>
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Tony Clarke Recreation Reserve—Waterfalls Rd, Macedon

Buses from Tony Clarke Recreation Reserve in Macedon will operate as a continual shuttle service with the first bus departing at 4:15AM and the last bus departing at 5:20AM. No booking required for this service.

BOOKINGS FOR ALL BUS SERVICES ESSENTIAL

TO BOOK VISIT: WWW.ORGANSCOACHES.COM.AU OR PHONE 5422 1788

COST: GOLD COIN DONATION APPRECIATED

NO PARKING AT THE CROSS – CAMERON DRIVE CLOSED

TAKE THE BUS

For further information, including disabled access, visit the Mt Macedon ANZAC Day Dawn Service Facebook page.
The pleasure of your company is requested at the
ST AMBROSE PARISH SCHOOL

Mother's Day Celebration

Friday 6th May 2016
7pm to 11.30pm

THE NORMA RICHARDSON HALL
15 Buckland Street, Woodend

LOCAL BAND: SWEET SPOT
Light Supper provided & Champagne on arrival
BYO DRINKS - CHEESE/DIP PLATTER, TEA & COFFEE PROVIDED

$35 per ticket....BOOK VIA CARE MONKEY

Pay for tickets online via Direct Deposit
BSB: 033 674 A/C 16318
acc name: PFA

Any queries to be directed to:
Kerrie Gaskin: 0403 128 757
kerrie.gaskin@optusnet.com
Leonie Barker: 0413 869 583
landobarker@hotmail.com