Dear parents and friends

A huge big welcome back to all members of our St Francis Xavier Primary school community. It is great to see so many familiar faces returning with smiles and eagerness ready to start the school year. Obviously everyone had a great holiday break and are well rested for a big year of learning ahead. A special welcome to the many new students and families that have joined our community. We have so many new students throughout the school and they have settled in so easily. We hope all new families enjoy their time here and find St Francis to be a welcoming and supportive place to belong. Attached to the newsletter you will find a welcome letter from the Executive Director of Catholic Education, Dr Tim McDonald. In the letter Tim challenges everyone to take up Pope Francis' call for the 'Year of Mercy' and by doing so the positive effect this will have on our school.

We also welcome some new staff to the school. Mrs Judi Hollands joins us in the role of Assistant Principal and Mrs Rebekah Smyth is teaching in year three in tandem with Judi. Mrs Kym Abbott has returned from maternity leave in a part time role teaching science. Along with all of the staff these ladies have already put in many hours of work to prepare themselves for the year and to ensure that your children have a smooth transition into school. A big thank you to all the staff for the preparation and planning they have done to ensure that each student has fantastic opportunities to develop and learn to their full potential.

Hopefully you have noticed around the school our new vision statement that not only outlines our aim of being an exemplary school but also highlights the two major areas of a catholic school: Discipleship and Learning. The statement indicates our commitment to develop a sense of community based around strong catholic values and to develop in all members of the community a desire to become life-long learners. Everything we do as a school community must be governed to meeting this vision statement. Whether it is new programs, resources, facilities or changes to procedures we must always ask if they will help us to meet our vision.

Stemming from our vision statement are two important documents we have within our school. The first is our school “Code of Conduct” which outlines our five core values that we expect all members of our school community, not just the students, to display at all times. A copy of this document will be sent home to each family this week. It is very important that as a family you sit down and read through it carefully. It covers areas such as responsibilities, consequences, rewards, bullying and school uniform. The second document is our “School Improvement Plan”. Each year as a school we identify areas for improvement using Quality Catholic Schooling reviews and surveys, student data, NAPLAN results etc. and develop areas for focus in Learning, Engagement, Accountability and Discipleship. This document helps us to continually strive to reach our vision. You will find an outline of our focus areas for this year on the back of today’s newsletter.

The safety and duty of care of students is very important, so a few reminders for parents:

- The car park at the front of the school is for staff only. Parents are not to park in the car park unless they have permission from the principal. Children are not to be dropped off or picked up by car in the car park, Please use the drop off bay near St Vinnie’s or the Catholic Centre.
- When entering or leaving the school via the senior oval, students are to use the cross walk near the office and not cross through other parts of the car park.
- If students arrive at school before 8.30am they are to go to the undercover area where they are supervised and not play out on the front lawn.

Attached with the newsletter is a copy of the term planner outlining dates of events for this term. Please note that we are holding a Welcome Open Night on Tuesday 23rd February. We encourage all parents to come along that night, meet class teachers, see your child’s classroom and ask any questions. Later in the term we will be holding individual parent/teacher meetings where you can discuss your child’s progress and learning in more detail. In the meantime if you wish to meet with your child’s teacher to discuss anything the teacher will be more than happy to accommodate you. Either see them or drop a note in your child’s diary to set up a time.

Finally all the staff are looking forward to a busy, but great year ahead, full of exciting learning opportunities. We wish all families a safe, happy and fruitful year.

God bless
Murray Gardiner

Principal

5 Maitland St, PO Box 131 Geraldton WA 6531
Tel. 9921 1711 Fax. 9921 5687

Our Vision

We are called to provide an exemplary Catholic Education.

Discipleship: With Christ as our light we aspire to nurture the whole person in a community centered on gospel values.

Learning: We are committed to providing an education that empowers all to become life-long learners.

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God bless
Murray Gardiner

Principal
RELIGION CORNER

Love is...: St Paul wrote: If I speak like an angel but do not have love, I am no better than a clanging cymbal. And if I can understand all the mysteries, have all knowledge, and faith big enough to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all that I own, even my body, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

The greatest of these is love. Love is the glue that keeps families together and gives us belonging and purpose. A lot of people think that love is simply a feeling. The Scriptures tell us that love is not a feeling, it's a choice we make to put others first.

Did you know? Ancient Greek had four different words for love. *Philia* is the love that friends have for each other. *Storge* is the loving bond between parents and children. *Eros* is a romantic love. *Agape* is a powerful, self-sacrificing love, like Jesus has for his people. St Paul wrote his letters in Ancient Greek and talks about Agape in his letters.

**Ash Wednesday Mass:** We will be celebrating our whole school Mass for Ash Wednesday on the 10th February at 11.30am in the school undercover area. Ash Wednesday is a Holy Day of Obligation which means it is a day we should go to Mass. So all parents and families of our school community are invited to come along and join in the celebration.

**Lent & Project Compassion:** Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a time of forty days where we prepare ourselves for Easter. There are three things we should do during the Lenten season: prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. In the Early Church, people preparing for baptism spent forty days fasting and praying as an act of repentance. It grew into a time for the whole church to repent and renew their baptismal vows. It is a time to take stock and turn away from bad habits and try to form good ones.

*Project Compassion* boxes will come home with students today, as well as in each of the classrooms and around the school. Please give generously to this fundraising to help Caritas fight poverty and injustice throughout the world. If you fill your money box return it to the school and get another one. At the end of term return all money boxes to the school and we will send the money to Caritas.

ADMINISTRATION NEWS

**MEDICAL ALERT**

It is parent's responsibility to provide an updated Action plan from their medical practitioner each year, of any medical conditions their child may have. These updated Action Plans (Anaphylaxis or Asthma) and medications need to be returned to the front office. Asthma medication stays with the teacher or child but Anaphylaxis medication (Epi-pens) must be kept at the office.

FROM THE FINANCE OFFICER

Welcome back to a new year. I have had a few people ask when they should pay their school fees. These will be invoiced and issued by the end of next week. You will receive the option to pay either annually or each term. If you choose to pay Term 1 only then each term thereafter you will receive an invoice for Tuition only.

**The Health Care Card Tuition Fee Discount Scheme:** If you are the holder of a means tested family Health Care Card or a Pensioner Concession Card with the code PPS, i.e. single parents receiving a Parent Payment Single allowance, then you are eligible for significant discount of the Tuition Fee only. You will need to complete an application form available on the website or from the front office and return this with a copy of your concession card.

It is preferred that statements are issued via email if you have one. If you have an email address and don't currently receive your fees by email, please let me know.

Fees can be paid by cash/eftpos, Bpay or Direct Debit and are due within 14 days unless other arrangements have been made.

WELCOME OPEN NIGHT

TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2016

6.30—7.30pm

Please come along to meet your child's teacher and find out what they will be learning in the classes this year.

LABELLING SCHOOL ITEMS

Could all parents please remember to CLEARLY LABEL STUDENT'S BELONGINGS, especially LUNCH BOXES. We already have a number left at school unclaimed.
ST FRANCIS XAVIER PRIMARY SCHOOL FACEBOOK PAGE

If you’re on Facebook we wish to advise you the school has it’s own page which is regularly updated with various information

RECYCLED UNIFORM SHOP NEWS

RECYCLED UNIFORM SHOP

Please come down to the Uniform shop, next to the Multi Purpose room to grab yourself a bargain! The Uniform shop will be OPEN each Monday from 2.30—3.00pm and Thursday from 8.45—9.15am. If you have any queries please contact Suzie on 0427 871 152.

COMMUNITY / SPORT NEWS

GERALDTON AUSKICK & JUNIOR FOOTBALL REGISTRATION DAY

Football is back! Boys and girls come along to register in Australia’s number 1 sport. Register in Auskick, U8, U10, U12, U14 or U16 to make new friends and have fun!

When: Sunday 14th February
Where: Towns Football Club (8th St. Wonthella)

Time: 2pm—3pm
Contact: Steve Broberg 0429 914 220 or look for us on Facebook for further information

REWARD OFFERED—LOST DOG

Blue/grey Staffy, lost in Wandina area on 1st February. Please phone 0407399632 if you have any information.

GERALDTON TRIATHLON CLUB—JUNIORS

Junior Super Series 2016

If you’re aged between 7-16 then why not come down and give Triathlon a go! We are now racing in a new location at Medallions Beach each Saturday morning until the 19th March. Registration is only $20 for the season and $2 each week. For all the club information check out our website www.geraldtontriclub.com.au, facebook page or contact Peter Hearne on 0488 151 551.

CANTEEN NEWS

Please read the Summer menu carefully
We only sell certain foods on certain days

Happy Birthday

Congratulations to the following students who had a birthday during the holidays and this week:

ST FRANCIS XAVIER PRIMARY SCHOOL

IMPROVEMENT FOCUS AREAS FOR 2016

VISION STATEMENT

We are called to provide an exemplary Catholic Education.
Dear Parents/Caregivers

Welcome to the start of the 2016 school year. The year promises to be full of possibilities in all our 163 vibrant, faith-filled learning communities each of which are centred on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis has declared 2016 the ‘Year of Mercy’. This challenges us all to be ‘merciful like the father’ in our daily lives. Imagine the transformative effect our school communities could have on society, if we were to take up Francis’ challenge, in our families and those we work with, as well as those who find themselves alienated, lonely and despised in society. Your school community will be creating a range of opportunities for students and families to honour and celebrate this special year and I encourage you to get involved.

If you are new to our system I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your family. You are joining Catholic education at an exciting time. We are in a period of significant growth and we have once again demonstrated sustained system-wide improvement in last year’s WACE results.

In the last three years we have opened seven new schools and colleges and 2016 marks the opening of Salvado Catholic College for the first time. I wish the students, parents and caregivers involved in the College’s foundation year all the very best.

All Catholic schools rely on the contribution of the parish, staff, students and parents working in partnership to sustain their vibrancy, educational excellence, and faith life. With your support and involvement in your child’s learning, the efforts of more than 11,000 dedicated school staff and principals can ensure that our Catholic schools help students across the state reach their God-given potential.

Thank you for your continued support and I wish you all the best for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

Tim McDonald
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<th>Week</th>
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<td>Feb. 1 Students start</td>
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<td>Ash Wednesday Mass UCA 11.30am</td>
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<td>Labour Day Public Holiday</td>
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<td>Yr 3H 12.05 Mass 9.00 Yr 4 Reconciliation 2.30 Yr 6R Assembly</td>
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**Holy Week**

- **Easter Monday**
- **Easter Tuesday**
- **April 1** Yr 2S 12.05 Mass