Dear Parent, Carers and Friends of Holy Cross

I begin with a HUGE “Thank you” to the P&F Association for our Welcome BBQ last Friday evening. It was a great night and so well attended – even the weather smiled on us. Of our 181 families in our school community I estimate that at least 2/3 were represented; an example of the strong ties our families have to each other and to our school community. There was a real buzz to the evening. “Thank you” to staff who supported the event too. It was a great evening. I have spoken with some new families to the school who enjoyed the opportunity to meet fellow parents. They are looking forward to being part of more of our community events. A special thanks to Alex Langguth, Sharee and Dion for setting up and running the Disco for the children.

Once again at Assembly our Year 7 students presented more of their growing understanding of leadership. On Monday all our Year 7s gathered with their teachers at Holy Cross Heritage Hall to reflect on leadership and their role as leaders. Some of the content of this day was presented at Assembly and more is on display in the School Foyer. Included in their reflections are the following statements:-

- A good leader gathers good followers. Oscar
- We are learners as well as teachers. Paris
- To serve and to lead. Shaun
- I would like to bring Spirit to Holy Cross. Domi

Our Student Leaders will be presented to the Parish School community at our Opening Mass on Saturday February 18th at 6pm. All are welcome!

There was a strong showing for our first Parents and Friends Association meeting on Wednesday evening. The agenda included discussion about the many events planned for 2012, particularly the Festival to be held on Sunday June 3. Thanks to Brian Nally for his great work in convening this wonderful event. Look out for communications from P&F about how you can be involved and support their work. The Association plays a vital role in our school!

Parent Information Evening is Wednesday 15th February (next Wednesday) Please take the opportunity to come and meet your child’s teacher to hear about the class program and routines. Remember, if you wish to speak to the teacher about your child’s progress, please make an appointment to do so, as the evening is a general information evening for all.

Attached is information from the National Catholic Education Commission regarding the level of combined federal and state funding to Catholic Schools in comparison to State and Independent Schools and Colleges. The data shows the Catholic School funding falls $2854 per student below state school funding for State schools and that annual average increases in the period 2005/6 to 2009/10 were just 0.7% compared to 2.7% for state run schools. As the results of the Gonski report into school education funding play out in the media, and as we lead up to a state election, it is good to recall these figures and to use them in your conversations with friends, work colleagues and family. You may even choose to contact your local state or federal representative to seek their response. Please also find attached the FULL TEXT of the letter from Mr David Hutton, Executive Director, Brisbane Catholic Education, part of which was published in the Courier Mail today.

If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough

Meister Eckhart

Have a wonderful week

Paul Drewniak
Principal

Holy Cross School
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**Dates to Remember:**

**February**
- 15 Chess Club begins
- 15 Parent Information Evening
- 15 City Districts Swimming @ Valley Pool

**March**
- 5 Yr 3 – Yr 7 Swimming Carnival @ Stafford State School
- 22 Zone 6 Swimming Carn @ Somerset State School

**Masses:**
- Holy Cross Church
  - February
  - 18 Opening School Mass 6pm
  - 22 Ash Wednesday

**Tuckshop**
- Tuckshop available on WEDNESDAY’S
  - Convenor: Mrs Sharlene Hamblin
  - Ph: 0401 665 318 or email: Dash 1099@hotmail.com

**Uniform Shop**
- Uniform Shop will be open
  - Open: Every Friday morning
  - Time: 8.00 – 9.00am
  - Convenor: Tanya Smith
  - Orders can be emailed to Tanya Smith.hcuniforms@gmail.com

**School Bell Times:**
- Start: 8.40am
- 1st Break: 10.50 – 11.20am
- 2nd Break: 1.20 – 1.50pm
- Finish: 2.45pm (Prep only)
  - 2.55pm (Yr 1 to Yr 7)

**Uniform Days**
- Mon & Tues: Day Uniform
- Wed, Thurs: Sports Uniform
- Friday: Day Uniform

**School Terms 2012:**
- Term 1: 24 January to 30 March
- Term 2: 16 April to 22 June
- Term 3: 9 July to 21 September
- Term 4: 8 October to December

**Public Holidays:**
- Good Friday: 6 April
- Easter Saturday: 7 April
- Easter Monday: 9 April
- Anzac Day: 25 April
- Labour Day: 7 May
- Queen’s Birthday: 11 June
- Ekka Show Day: 15 August

**TIMES FOR PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2012**

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<tr>
<td>Prep, Yr 6 &amp; Yr 7</td>
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<td>Yr 2, Yr 2/3 &amp; Yr 3</td>
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<td>Yr 1 &amp; Yr 4/5</td>
<td>7.40pm – 8.10pm</td>
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A.P.R.E.’s Report
I have no problem imagining God’s face when I arrive in Heaven because, as a teacher, one of my greatest joys is meeting up with the students I have taught or have known in my many years in schools.
This hit home again to me last Friday evening at the welcome BBQ when some students from last years greeted me so warmly, with a confidence that is a natural by-product of having successfully manoeuvred the transition to the next stage of their lives. My heart was full as I looked at these gorgeous young people who without any doubt whatsoever, were tackling all the challenges of secondary school in exactly the way that they had been prepared. Hard as it is to let them go, it is also so very ‘right’!

God prepares us for the transitions along the way and must be delighted when we greet the challenges with Faith, faith in ourselves and what we have learnt and faith in the people around us. That is what I experienced with those students on Friday night. I am part of their story, and they are part of mine and yet, they have moved on, as I hoped and prayed they would. They have been touched by all those who were part of their lives at Holy Cross and who have become forever part of the fabric of their lives.
And that is the way it should be. Even our God does not hold onto us, but gives us nudges along the way, so that we grow into the people we are meant to be.
To say I felt proud is an understatement, so I can only conjecture about how God feels when looking at each of us!
God is with us!

Patty McCourt

Pastoral Care Corner
Dear Parents
A Swedish proverb to start this week!
“Fear less, hope more; eat less, chew more; whine less, breath more; talk less, say more; hate less, love more; and all good things will be yours.”
While that could fill a week’s thinking time, I would also like to share a few thoughts from Dr Karen Macpherson, from the University of Canberra. In the Courier Mail of January 31, she wrote that “mealtime is a moment best shared”. Her research indicates something we instinctively know, but sometimes forget, or don’t make time to put into practice. Mealtimes are very important in the development of a child’s social, emotional and physical development. Studies of hundreds of thousands of children indicate that meals eaten together at least four or five times a week can:
• improve eating habits for children and decrease eating disorders in teenagers
• improve language skills for young children, as everyone around the table chatters
• encourages better parent-child communication which in turn decreases issues such as substance abuse and risky behaviours.
So, for these and dozens of other good reasons, it is worth the effort to have some family meals together, around the table (not the TV). Try it and see what happens.

God bless
Sr Anne.

TOWELS, PLEASE
Some of you would remember Paddy Connelly, who used to work in the Parish Office. She is now helping with the Homeless Youth Centre in the Valley. Many young people ‘drop in’ for a shower and a meal. They are looking for towels and toiletries. If you have any unneeded towels, please send them along to school and I will get them to Paddy. I will also redirect some of the toiletries you bring in, to her. Thank you in anticipation.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
The school community wishes the students who celebrate their birthday this week many happy returns:
Sasha Macaulay & Sophie Fahey

PREP ENROLMENTS FOR 2013
Do you have a child ready to start Prep in 2013? Please collect Enrolment Application Form from the office and return together with:
An Application Fee of $25.00
From the Parish Priest
Early this week, I visited the Year Seven's in the Holy Cross Hall. They were engaging in their leadership day and it was a pleasure to be with them. They are a large group! It was such a hot day and even the huge fans didn't seem to be doing the trick.

I was glad to be invited to speak for a few minutes with them. I asked a few questions: who is baptised? Who is a baptised Catholic?

The next question: so what's some differences being a Year Seven leader in the parish school and a Year Seven leader in another school.

It's an important question. Why? We have a distinctive approach to education that holds the experience of Jesus in the community of the Church as being a non-negotiable part and parcel of formation of our young students.

I invited the Year Seven's this year to be leaders after the example of Jesus. To test out what 'leadership with Him' looks like. To be school leaders who seek 'gospel moments' each day and in each event.

As we look forward to our parish celebration of the start of the parish school year next Saturday night at Holy Cross church, I ask families of Year Seven's (and indeed all parish families) to consider where is the experience of Eucharist in their lives? How might the regular experience of Sunday Mass within family life shape the service of each Year Seven this year?

For in Mass, God 'works' on us through the Spirit, renewing us and reshaping us to be 'Good News' disciples. I hold onto an image of Mass as being like 'the wellspring for a living faith'. Without this wellspring, I'm unsure who I'm becoming. Eucharist is all about God renewing the gifts given to each person as we offer our thanks and praise to the same Creator. What will the student leadership of the school become this year with the Sunday Mass at the centre of life?

Fr John Francis Fitz-Herbert
Parish Priest

HOLY CROSS SWIMMING CARNIVAL YEARS 3-7
When: Monday 5th March, 2012
Where: Stafford State School,
Time: 9-30am – 2.00pm

The Zone 6 Swimming Carnival will be on Thursday 22 March at Somerset State School

CALLING ALL TUCKSHOP EXTRAORDINAIRES ....
Thank you to all those parents who have filled our homebake roster for this Term. We are seeking helpers in the Tuckshop for the following dates to ensure we can open:
22 February; 14, 21 & 28 March.
Lunch, admiration from your kids and good time included free!
Contact Sharlene on 0401 665 318 or dash1099@hotmail.com with your dates. Thank you!!

TUCKSHOP
Helpers for Wednesday 15th February are:
Tuck-shop: Jo Watson, Misia Caulton, Sharon Vogel, Navpreet Kaur, Britt Pradella & Cathy Bennett

Home bake: Britt Pradella, Kate Beal, Bronwen Norris, Amanda Stickley, Rebecca Sampson, Toni Hickling, Kylie Braine, Loretta Mammarella

Please note our NUT FREE POLICY
When preparing Homebake items.

Dear Parents,
The Federal Government’s Gonski Review of Funding for Schools has now been presented to the government. A period of government consultation and public debate on its recommendations is expected to follow after the report’s release later this month. As key stakeholders in the future of Catholic education it is vital that you are aware of the facts about school funding, so that you are able to participate in this debate at any opportunity. Please find attached a graph that illustrates the comparative average resourcing levels of the State, Catholic and Independent schooling sectors in Australia. For more detailed information about school funding I encourage you to visit the website developed by the National Catholic Education Commission at:
www.fundinginfo.catholic.edu.au
GOTCHA CARDS – Week 3

GOTCHA CARDS have been designed to encourage and reward good behaviour in an effort to boost each child’s self esteem and improve the general standard of behaviour at our school.

Well done to all the ‘Gotcha Card’ recipients who have done a brilliant job of demonstrating our school-wide positive behaviour expectations (Safety, Learning & Respect).

The following children won seats in our assembly Corporate Box:

Meka Morrison
Ally Cathcart
Sam Patane
Lauren Birthisel
Mikayla Jebreen
Frank Piper
Dominic Cutajar
Thomas Gordon
Tasmyn Ormond-Currie

Also, keep an eye out for our Gotcha Card display in the hallway near the office.

Ladies mark this date in your diary today: Saturday 24th March
Why? A fantastic and exclusive shopping opportunity awaits!
Estee Lauder Companies Corporate Store Fundraiser (Estee Lauder, Clinique, MAC, Bobbi Brown Essentials, Aramis, Donna Karen, Tommy Hilfiger, Aveda, Jo Malone) products at 40% off retail prices!
Admission $10 per person, relatives and friends most welcome (this money goes directly to Holy Cross P&F fundraising).
More information and tickets available from Deanne Chester
dandpcchester@optusnet.com.au
Tickets must be purchased prior to the event - no tickets at the door.
This store is not open to the public.
So come along and get your favourite cosmetics at bargain prices!

Thank you to Mark Gordon for making beautiful new lockers for the two prep rooms. These new spacious lockers are a God send to students and staff alike.
We can’t thank you enough Mr Gordon!!!
The staff and families of prep.

LIBRARY NEWS
2012 is the International year of reading, so watch this space for how we will celebrate. Happy reading,
Leanne Forsythe

CHESS CLUB:
All children who submitted chess club forms are welcome to come this Wednesday.
Chess Club is conducted in the library from 3pm till 4.15.

Chess Club is conducted in the library from 3pm till 4.15.
Jane Fynes-Clinton (CM 9-2-12) rightly points out that there should be adequate funding for state schools and that state schools accommodate a wide range Australian families.

Regrettably, she implies in her article that all students in non-government schools attend elite private schools that are overfunded at the expense of state schools.

The reality is that non-government schools also cater to a wide range of Australian society including those in rural, remote and low socio-economic areas. The majority of non-government schools are not elite schools; they are Catholic schools which generally reflect the local communities in which they operate.

Unfortunately, some people use misleading funding figures which confuse the issue. Historically non-government schools are funded mostly by the Commonwealth government and state schools receive most of their funding from the state governments. There is much commentary which only refers to the Commonwealth component, and therefore gives a distorted and misleading picture.

The only fair way to compare government funding for the different school sectors is to add together both the Commonwealth and the state contributions. Data published by ACARA on the My School website clearly shows the level of total government funding provided to the average student in state schools in 2011 was $10,562, in Catholic schools $7,708 and in independent schools $6,211.

A review of funding for all schools is timely. I look forward to an informed discussion following the release of the Gonski report which hopefully will provide us with a fair and just way forward that adequately resources all students according to their need. Simplistic and misleading ‘us and them’ commentary will not serve the future of education in Australia.

David J Hutton
Executive Director of Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Brisbane
61 7 30337542