



Newsletter / 20 August

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This past fortnight has been a complex one for the St Benedict' community following the announcement of school closure at the end of this academic year. St Benedict's has been an extraordinary place of learning for young people in the parish for over 75 years. In that time there have been many thousands of children and hundreds of families who have been part of the school community. In addition, many staff, both past and present, have been part of the wonderful community of people who have supported children through their primary education experience.

In speaking with some of you over that past fortnight I have heard your sadness and disappointment about what will happen at the end of this year mixed in with your gratitude and acknowledgement of the creative learning experiences the staff at St Benedict's have provided for you and your child during this time of remote learning. We will continue with the learning till the end of the year in a 'business as usual' mode. This will mean teachers will provide authentic and challenging learning opportunities each day. When we return to on-site learning, we are planning exciting and inspiring experiences for the children. Teaching and learning, assessment, reports and folios will continue to be the experience at St Benedict's till December.

With the support of CEM we are beginning the process of ensuring there will be appropriate celebrations to mark the end of this experience at St Benedict's for existing students. We also have the responsibility of ensuring that every child has a place to continue their education for 2021. And another committee to look at staff placements for 2021; and winding up the school finances.

Captain Covid

Some of the students attending onsite have been creating new superheroes for 2020. **Captain Covid** is well prepared to fight off the disease with his reflective suit and he is demonstrating excellent hygiene measures with his mask. His wings allow him to travel quickly to wherever he is needed.

School Assembly via google meet on Monday

We will be having a whole school assembly via Google meet at 9:30am on Monday 24 August via google meet.



School transition 2021 support

As each of you make your decision about the next step in your child's journey in education there are many things in place to support you and your child as they transition. If you need to photocopy documents to submit with applications, then please feel free to make use of the school photocopier (with the temporary closure of Officeworks I know this is a concern). This can be done on any day. I have begun the process of phone calls to surrounding Catholic school principals and they have been extraordinarily positive and supportive and look forward to your applications – please make sure you let them know your child is a St Benedict's student. There will be opportunities for your child to connect with their new school community during Term 4 – either on-site or remotely.

Social Justice Sunday

This year's theme for Social Justice Sunday *To Live Life to The Full: Mental Health in Australia Today*. Each year the bishops of Australia sponsor the publication of a statement that touches on an issue in Australian society. I am sure they began the process of discerning the theme and the content of this statement well before the events of 2020 have unfolded. And with bushfires and then the pandemic this statement has greater relevance than ever before. An excerpt from the foreword from Archbishop of Brisbane, Mark Coleridge:

We want to say clearly that mental ill-health is not a moral failure, the result of a lack of faith, or of weak will. Jesus himself was labelled mad (Mark 3:21; John 10:19) and, like us, he suffered psychological distress (Luke 22:44; Matt 26:37; Mark 14:33; John 12:27). People experiencing mental ill-health are not some 'other' people, they are 'us'. People in our families, faith communities, workplaces and society are suffering mental ill-health – and they can be of any age or socioeconomic background. Whoever and whatever they are, they need our understanding and support...

...It is surely time for us to make mental health a real priority, so that all people may know the fullness of life which Jesus offers (John 10:10). (p.2)

This statement has much to remind us about care for each other and well-being strategies we can implement. We are reminded that at any time we can be more fragile and in need of support. And care for the whole person in the community is one of the actions we know Jesus engaged in during his ministry, for example when he cured the Gerasene demoniac (Mt8:28-34). More recently you may have seen messages of support for Melburnians on the TV from people across Australia. This simple gesture reminds us that we are in the thoughts and prayers of our whole country while we endure this difficult time of Stage 4 restrictions.

Together, we promote the fullness of life for all when we ensure appropriate care for everyone experiencing mental ill-health:

- *when we reject stigmatisation,*
- *when we work for the transformation of social determinants of mental ill-health,*
- *when we call for policies and service provision that meet the needs of the poorest, most marginalised and recognise in them the face of Christ Jesus. (p.18)*

You can find the 2020 social justice statement [here](#).

Message from Archbishop Peter

In recognition of these challenging times, Archbishop Peter Comensoli has recorded a special message for all Catholic schools. You can find it [here](#).

COVID19 - Stage 4 Restrictions

Thank you for all that you are doing to support the learning of your child while flexible and remote learning continues. We are staying positive that we will return to on-site learning – and if not, we are ready to continue with remote and flexible learning. We await news from the Victorian government and will advise you of any updates.

Resource Pack pick up

Resource packs will be available at the front office each Friday afternoon from 2:30-3:45pm. If this time does not suit, please email your child's classroom teacher to arrange an alternative time.

Temperature checks in Term 3

Daily temperature checks with a thermometer are happening at St Benedict's for all staff and students who are onsite. This follows the advice of Victoria's Chief Health Officer.

On-Line Safety - Interactive Learning Modules

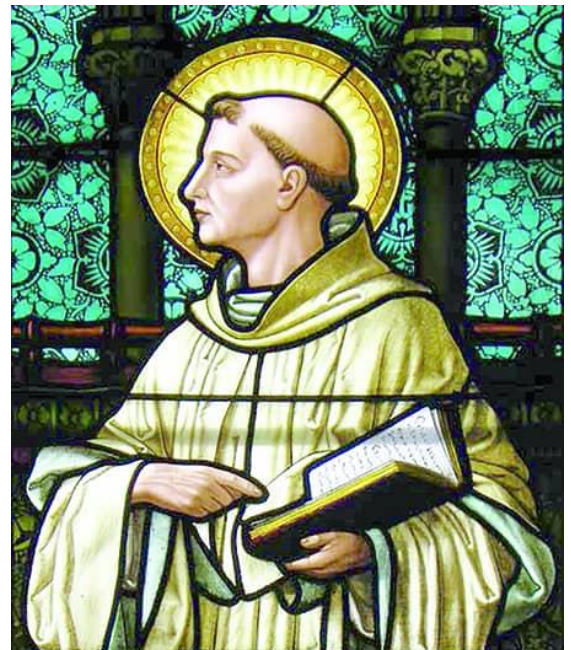
The Victorian Department of Education has developed some modules specifically for parents about:

- [Bullying and cyberbullying](#)
This module - developed in partnership with Andrew Fuller (clinical psychologist and student wellbeing specialist) - has been developed to help parents understand, recognise and manage bullying and cyberbullying behaviours.
- [Cybersafety and social media](#)
This module - developed in partnership with Susan McLean (cybersafety expert) - has been developed to help parents address standards of behaviour in the context of cybersafety and social media.

The modules can also be found [here](#).

Prayer

Our prayer this week focuses on St Bernard, it is his feast day today, 20 August. St Bernard was a theologian and a Doctor of the church in the twelfth century, and is the patron saint of bees, beekeepers and candle-makers. He was an eloquent and charismatic young man when he first joined the Benedictine monastery of Citeaux in 1113. Later he was commissioned to found the Cistercian monastery at Clairvaux in France, where his focus on routine and austerity contributed to the growth of monasteries throughout Europe. St Bernard contributed to church thinking through his commentaries on the Bible and his many sermons, as well as his theology of sacred space and music. He was a prolific writer who constantly emphasised the love of God. He recognised the importance of *lectio divina*, a contemplation that include scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote the place of God in the life of the world.





St Bernard had a special devotion to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and this prayer of intercession is attributed to him:

The Memorare of St. Bernard

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help,
and sought your intercession,
was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence,
I fly unto you,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother,
to you do I come,
before you I stand sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word Incarnate!
despise not my petitions,
but, in your mercy, hear and answer me.

Amen.

Blessings to each one of you and your families. Stay safe, stay healthy. Remember, by staying apart we are doing this together.

Ms Caroline Sheehan
Acting Principal

Diary Dates

Diary Dates		
Term Three		
18 September	Term 3 ends	3:15pm
Term Four		
5 October	Term 4 commences	8.45am

Religious Education

It was with great sadness that we were all given the news last week of the closing of our beautiful school here at St Benedict's. Our hearts are heavy however this has been a wonderful place of love, nurturing, kindness and great learning opportunities. It has been a privilege to work here for such a long time and with the many wonderful colleagues, families and students that I've met.

When I arrived here at St Benedict's 22 years ago the students all knew the chorus of 'In The Spirit of St Benedict' but no one had learnt the verses. The verses are so beautiful and every time we sing the song it is a gentle but timely reminder of how we should be with one another. The final verse is particularly poignant at this time and always gave us something to strive towards, so I'm sharing the words with you.

*'Seek out the face of Christ in those you meet
Make a welcome space for those who come your way
And share your gift with all, to the glory of our God
And the love of Christ himself, will fill your heart.'*

Monica Brown

My heart is full!

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28 *A Canaanite woman asks Jesus to heal her daughter.*

Gospel Reflection

This week's gospel provides a fascinating illustration of Jesus' response to those in need. Jesus has travelled to the area of Tyre and Sidon – part of modern day Lebanon. He was physically removing himself from the place of his very active ministry and taking a break. When the Canaanite woman approaches Jesus and his disciples, she is an interruption; a nuisance. Jesus is very abrupt with her. He tells her simply that his ministry is to the house of Israel – the Jews – and is not for her. But the woman is persistent and again asks Jesus to help her. Jesus is even more abrupt and tells her that it is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs. Through this use of metaphor, Jesus refers to the children of Israel (the Jews) and to the gentiles and pagans – sometimes referred to as 'dogs' to reflect their lowly status in the eyes of the Jewish tradition. Still the woman persists and turns Jesus' metaphor back on him, saying that even the dogs get to eat the scraps that fall from the table.



The woman's persistence and faith pay off. Jesus is moved by her faith and through that faith heals the woman's daughter. Despite his initial abruptness and reluctance, Jesus responds with compassion to the woman's request. It is as though she needed to demonstrate that she was really serious and that she did in fact believe that Jesus could make a difference in her life and the life of her daughter. This is an important story in Matthew's gospel. This gospel was written predominantly for Jewish Christians but this story reveals that the ministry of Jesus and the reign of God is open to anyone who believes.

Scriptural Context

This passage sits in the middle of a group of three stories that make up Chapter 15 of Matthew's Gospel. The first story deals with Jesus challenging traditional views of cleanliness and uncleanness – one of the great separators between Jews and Gentiles. The story of this week's gospel follows with its account of the Canaanite woman's great faith being recognised. Finally, Matthew's gospel relates the story of the feeding of the four thousand – a dramatic sign by Jesus of the open invitation to receive his message and ministry. The three stories, taken together, form a powerful chapter that makes clear that the message of Jesus is not exclusively for the Jews.

Historical Context ... Who were the Canaanites?

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, the 'Promised Land' they sought was the land of Canaan (approximately the area of modern Israel, TransJordan, Syria and Lebanon). Here they were commanded to utterly destroy the Canaanites and to subdue the land. (Exodus 23:23-24) The Israelites never successfully removed all the Canaanites from the Palestine region. By the time of Jesus, the Israelites had established themselves in the region between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north, while the original inhabitants of the area had been 'squeezed out' – predominantly to the north. The Canaanites were dispossessed of their land by the Israelites and it is easy to see why there was tension between them.

Mary Brooks

Religious Education Leader

Learning and Teaching

Senior B News

End of Week 6! Can it really be? As of next week we have four weeks of this term to go. What everyone has achieved is astounding! We are now over half way through the term and everyone seems to be managing the remote learning so well. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can help in any way or if you feel your child needs extra assistance.

The announcement of the school closure has certainly been front and centre in the last week or so but I want to reassure you all that, regarding learning and teaching, it is business as usual. We have the remainder of this term and all of the fourth term to continue in this learning space. We will all be here to support each other.

Our Religious Education focus is the signs and symbols of the seven sacraments.

Next week in Mathematics we will move onto Financial Maths. Our units on fractions, decimals and percentages have been an excellent lead into this next concept.

In Writing we have begun our poetry unit which will take us to the end of the term, culminating in the creation of a personal poetry anthology of poems the students have read and personally like and poems they have written themselves using formulas as well as free verse.

Comprehension strategies are the focus of our Reading, particularly inference and summarising. This will be part of our poetry unit as well as other reading activities.

It was great to have everyone in 'party mode' for Reema's birthday last Friday. She got a lovely surprise (Nadine had kept the secret very well). It is wonderful that we can still celebrate these important occasions, even if it is remotely.



I'm hoping to have a BIG focus on games next week. There will be a few more bits and pieces coming home in this week's pack for some more games for both literacy and maths and maybe some other surprises. Each student has an A5 sized wallet to store all the game pieces in so please help them to keep this well organised.

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Have a great weekend, be creative with the lockdown and be good to yourselves.

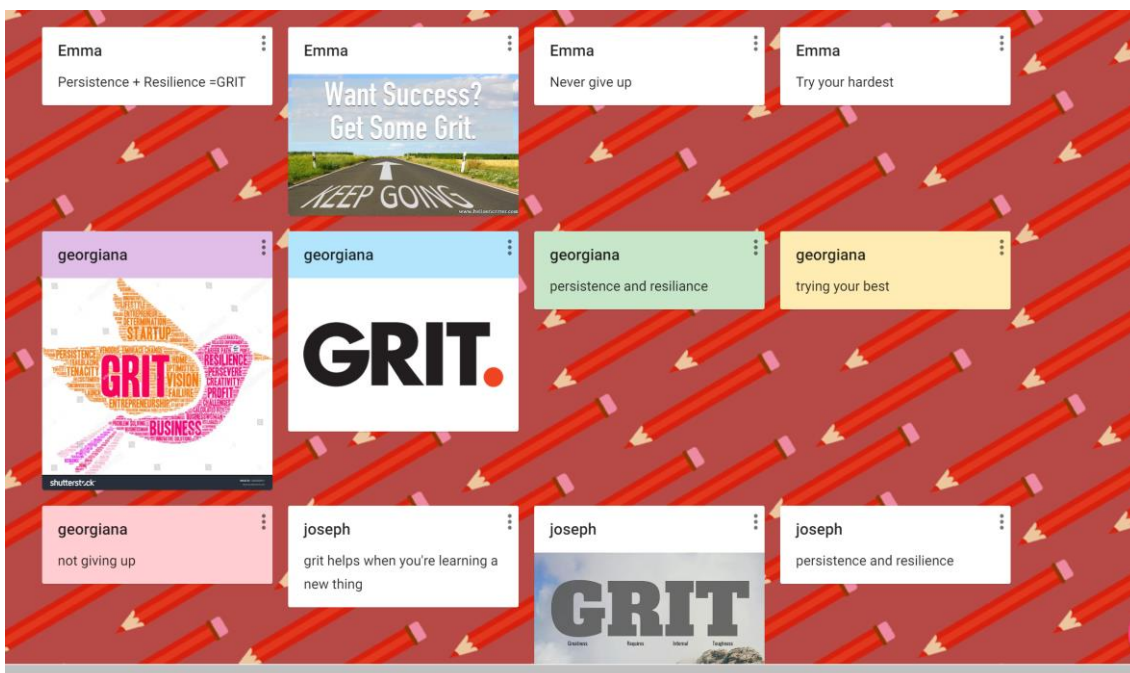
Mary Brooks

Senior B Teacher

Middle School News

Can you believe that we are already half way through Term Three? The students have continued with their learning without missing a 'beat'. Not one student has missed the morning meeting this term and it is lovely to see their faces each day. We have introduced a new tool this term for online discussions - padlet - and are having fun connecting with each other.

In Social and Emotional Learning, we have been discussing 'Grit.' Having Grit means you have a determined courageous attitude. It means that you will keep trying to reach a goal no matter how many obstacles you face. It also means you will never give up. We added some fantastic insights:



In Mathematics, we have been exploring 3D objects and angles. We are beginning a unit on Multiplication and about to have some fun fine-tuning our Location skills.

In English our focus has been figurative writing - especially similes and metaphors. We have begun 'Book Club' and our first book is *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* written by Eleanor Crane. We read the book together, at a Google Meeting, and then discussed elements together. As part of our Procedural Writing unit we learnt how to make origami paper cranes. We did this at our meeting with our Xavier Year 12 friends and followed verbal instructions to make a paper crane.

We are beginning a Poetry unit where we hope to find out about poetic styles especially some Japanese styles.

In Digital Technologies we are looking at algorithms, as well as contributing to the whole school STEM challenge each fortnight. Our Art is closely linked with our Inquiry unit on Culture, as we look at how visual art is influenced by culture, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

We are completing our Reconciliation preparation and brainstormed online our thoughts about 'Forgiveness and Healing.'



Forgiveness and Healing

Write what you know about Forgiveness and Healing. Think about the following: What do we learn from others about forgiveness? Why do you need someone to forgive you? Why do you need to forgive others? When is it easy to forgive? When is it hard to forgive? What are the qualities of people who forgive us? Tell us a time when Jesus Christ forgave.

Hannah to love	dimidi try to make you child be nice	Hannah to make amends	dimidi love and forgive
Hannah 	georgiana 	dimidi don't run away from you problems	Hannah we can restart
rafael if you don't forgive God will punish you	dimidi forgive if you made a bad choice	Emma 	Hannah Forgiveness is what shows that God loves us
dimidi ignore the people who are being rude to you	georgiana 	rafael forgive	rafael forgive
dimidi when people do the bad thing you can make a difference by changing your personality	Emma God can forgive anyone	make new friends rafael I	Emma When I got forgiven I was much happier for the next two days
rafael be best friends	joseph so you do not dislike each other	georgiana 	joseph so you don't fight
dimidi so you can have the best life you can have	georgiana say sorry	joseph to make them feel better	Emma When I got forgiven I felt my heart being cleaned from sin
dimidi so you don't make bigger problems			

The weekly Google Meeting with some of the Year 12 Xavier students was a highlight for our students, but was cut short due to the Xavier boys returning to remote learning.

This week is National Science Week (August 17 – 23). Here are a couple of websites you might like to visit to find out more.

- <https://www.scienceweek.net.au/> This is the Australian Government website set up for Science Week. There are some virtual tours, ideas for things you can do at home and ideas for places to visit – when we can.
- <https://trishtrchala.wixsite.com/library> This comes from the librarian at Xavier, who worked with the Library and STEM student leaders to create this site. Competitions are for any student who would like to enter from Kinder to Year 4 no matter what school they go to. There are lots of prizes to win and certificates will be sent through the post for those who participate.

Jane Michael and Maryann Hamilton

Junior School News

As we near the end of week 6 I am really pleased with the work the children are doing. Everyone is completing most of the set work and the responses to our unit on forgiveness shows me that the children have a deep understanding of what it means to forgive and why it is important. I am also really excited to see how well the children are writing. The work they have done around the Dreamtime stories has been very good. A few more capital letters and full stops will be something to focus on for the coming weeks.

Our maths unit this week continues the work we started on patterns in second term. The interactive number board on their toolbar is a very helpful tool for this. Next week we will begin a unit on interpreting data. That involves looking at different graphs and making meaning of what information is set out on them. Thank you to everyone who sent photos of their Rainbow Snake, they really look great.

The topic for next week's Show and Tell is 'Where we like to go as a Family'. The weeks are out on the timetable I sent you during the holidays because the children didn't start till week 2. I will resend the amended timetable in the tub next week. Please send photos of your child at work and their portfolio as I have other work to include.

Regards,
Deborah Torre



L'Italiano per Tutti

(Italian for everyone)

Buongiorno,

First of all, thank you to all the children (and the parents/carers) who are completing their work at home. You have been very busy.

Juniors – The Juniors have been continuing to learn the numbers in Italian and are now moving on to colours. I am so looking forward to having Google Meets with them this term.

Middles – The Middles have been working on their slide presentation of *l'alfabeto italiano*. They are now editing and putting the final touches to their work.

Seniors – The Seniors have been working with verbs and are now using them as their own movements to the song *Gioca Jouer*. When these are complete, we hope to share them with the other students.

Feel free to ask the children to show you what they have done, especially the Middles and Seniors. If it makes sense to you, then they are probably on the right track.

Ciao,

Signora Smarrelli

STEM – Whole School Challenge

We had some very creative contributors to the Domino challenge! Check out the photos below.

Time to storm the castle. 🏰 This week the challenge is to build a catapult. You can use icy pole sticks, spoons, lego, whatever else you can find. Make sure whatever it is you send flying is soft - pom poms, rolled up paper or marshmallows are safer than stones or marbles!

Here are some ideas, but you can look up others to use what you have on hand.



As always, send your photos/videos so we can share your wonderful creations.

Here are some from the previous challenge.





Community News

CareMonkey is rebranding to 'Operoo'

**Date change: CareMonkey will now
become Operoo on the 10th August**

You can continue using the system, and its mobile application as usual. Just be aware that emails and notifications from the system will start appearing under the new name 'Operoo'. You will automatically be diverted to the new Operoo website if you go the old CareMonkey website.



SPARE ROOM?

- ▶ Hosting an international student is easy
- ▶ Set your own fees and inclusions.
- ▶ Choose guests to suit your Homestay.
- ▶ Enjoy more freedom and choice, than hosting via a Traditional Agency.

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