



# St Nicholas of Myra School

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Term 4 Week 9  
2014

## SAVE THE DATE

### Christmas Concert

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December  
2014 5:30pm BBQ and  
6:30pm Concert

### 175 years Parish Closing Mass

7th December 10am

### 2015 MAI Testing

Online Booking  
closes 7th Dec

### Thank you Morning Tea

for Volunteers  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December  
11:00am - 12:00pm

### Stage 1 Excursion

9th December

### End of Year & Graduation Mass

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>  
December 9:30am

### Reports Go Home

11th December

### End of Year Assembly

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December  
9:30 am

### Talent Quest

Friday 12th December  
12pm—1pm

### Graduation Dinner

at The White Swan  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December  
6:30 pm

### Swimming Carnival

16th December

### 17 December Last day of school

## St Nicholas Feast Day Celebrations

This Friday we will mark the Feast of St Nicholas with a day of celebrations. The day will begin with a liturgy put together by Stage 2. This will commence at 9:15am in the hall. At the conclusion of this service, Christmas Ornaments will be displayed for sale/donations. Students in each stage are currently putting together Christmas ornaments. On Friday these will be displayed and parents and carers will have the opportunity to purchase/make a donation for their child's ornament. If you are unable to make it for the liturgy, ornaments will be sold in the afternoon before the start of the Christmas Concert. Please note that if you are unable to attend either of these events, it can be arranged for your child's ornament to go home when a donation is sent in. These arrangements can be made through a note to the classroom teacher.

Following the Liturgy and the sale of ornaments, classrooms will be opened briefly for parents and carers to wander in and visit their children. All family members are welcome to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy with their children between **11:00-11:40am**.



On Friday afternoon, we will be continuing the celebrations with a BBQ commencing at **5:30pm**, followed by our annual Christmas concert at **6:30pm**.

We hope that you can join us for all, if not part, of the celebrations on Friday.

**CHRISTMAS IS FAST APPROACHING!!  
COME AND BE PART OF THE FUN!!**

### Dear Parents, Carers and Students of St Nicholas of Myra,

Advent is a season of hope, longing and waiting. This time is forward focused - looking at the moments in our lives where we live in eager longing for the birth of our Saviour. Advent gives us permission to stop the busyness, confusions and stresses of our lives to be a part of the peace and joy that the Child in a manger offers us. We experience this stillness of peace when we embrace a sleeping child in our arms - as we lovingly look at them as they sleep and we are often in awe. This time of wonder is an act of God's love for us - a love that is reflected in fragility, innocence and vulnerability of a baby.

Advent is God's gift to us, a time to reconnect with our faith, a time to see our life for what it is. And so, when we prepare for Christmas, let us try not to get caught up in all the presents, tinsel and events. Let us make the time to pray, to be **PRESENT** with our loved ones and to give thanks as a family to God for all the good in our lives.

### The Second Sunday of Advent....

The Church leads into its Third Sunday of Advent this week, called "Gaudete Sunday." Gaudete is Latin for "rejoice." While we are called to rejoice, we are also called to search our hearts, to discover where, both individually and as a community, we need to change. It is a time of expectation, for we are told that the One is coming to heal our brokenness, to heal our fractured families, to reconnect with our Church and to seek universal peace.

This Advent so many themes remind me of an experience on Pilgrimage. The experience I would like to share with you is an audience with Pope Francis. An 'audience' takes place outside in St Peter's Square. It is a huge event that occurs each Wednesday morning in Rome.

The themes of waiting resonated with this experience as we waited, walked, **WAITED, WALKED** and led by a guide who told us to stick very closely together and follow the flag, we nudged, weaved and were led expertly through the lines to St Peter's Square outside the Vatican.

Our guide was well versed and experienced in Papal Audiences and cleverly led us to the side and ushered us to the back seats in the corner of the audience. She said, "Just trust it is better!" Again we waited, we prayed the Rosary, we waited, we took photos regularly as the crowd started to build. Over this time the rest of the seats in front of us filled up.

Thousands of them. The standing room was also packed – this was a regular Wednesday morning occurrence – I sat there thinking about what Wednesday's normally look like for me at work.....basically nothing like this experience, my mind wandered to the crowd as well – are there some regulars? Or do people travel to have this experience from around the world?...I was also wondering, why were these people here?..... So the audience grew to about 12 000 people, of all different ages and cultures all from around the world.

The shuffling and highly anticipated atmosphere of the crowd shifted to a large welcoming roar of great joy. A tidal wave of people shifted like sands in front of us, following this white buggy. The mega screens flicked on to show the Pope standing, waving and welcoming the people with an inner joy that radiated from deep within – he was truly happy!



Here was the Pope dressed in white, surrounded by men in black suits (of which some were taking video footage of the crowd), smiling, reaching out to the crowd to bless some children and people with disabilities. This moment in time was that joyous, peaceful excitement.

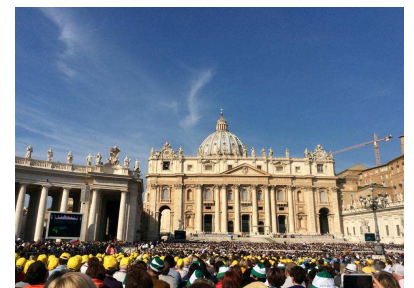
You always knew where the Pope was because the people would run across the crowds in front of us, waving and shouting "PAPA!" Suddenly he was heading towards the back of the crowd closer to us.....I jumped up on the chair (safely of course!), waving frantically and he stopped just ahead of us – it was a still moment in time, when you just stop in awe and wonder...holding your breath and doing what my Mother always told me not to do.... stare.....I just stared ..... mesmerised that the Pope was so close! He truly looked content and almost in his element to be with us. He beamed and lingered a loving, welcoming joy... I turned around .....seeing so many people reaching out, calling his name.....I knew this was extraordinary and a moment that was monumentally precious. Pope Francis through this

acceptance of people is building many bridges to many people, like the arms of the Vatican extending out in a loving embrace.

Pope Francis took his time to reach out to the whole square, upon returning to a temporary stage, he spoke about the importance of family, of being together, praying together. After this, a roll call took place of visiting people, when Catholic Education Office of PARR –A-MAT TA, OZ STRA LIA was announced we jumped and shouted for joy – a good classic rowdy Australian welcome!

The photos I have shared have come from myself and others on the pilgrimage. With these images and my words, I hope help to paint the image of this occasion, however if you are ever in Rome on a Wednesday – I highly recommend you experience this sense of the universal Catholic Church, whose face is accepting and loving to all! I hope that you can imagine the scene...for me it was one of the many highlights of my pilgrimage.

Peace and Joy  
Anita Knezevic  
Principal



### *Donations for St Vincent de Paul Hamper Appeal*

*Please donate by*

**Thursday 11th December,**

**Non perishable food items. Jellies, fruit cake, custard, tin fruit  
(No Baked beans or Spaghetti)**

**Toiletries, Christmas decorations, bon bons etc would be appreciated**





As we move towards the end of the year, it is really important that we keep on being successful learners. The holidays are an opportunity to rest and to have family time at a more leisurely pace. Every minute counts in the final weeks and we need your help to keep our children at school every day until the end of term.

Talk to your children about the importance and why you value learning, share with them what makes an effective learner. Here are some pointers;

- be actively engaged in the lesson
- use trial and error to make mistakes to work through the learning
- learning is hard at times and that is okay
- ask questions to your peers and your teachers
- learn from others and with others
- ask for feedback from your teachers on how you can improve
- use your initiative, persist and be willing

#### From the Finance Department

We would appreciate that all monies and payments due to school be sent to the office by Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December for processing and receipting. Thank you



Are you moving or leaving the school at the end of 2014.

Please contact the school office.

A leaving form needs to be completed.

*Thank you*

#### Stage Two's Excursion to the Nan Tien Temple

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November, Stage Two went on the best excursion ever! We travelled to the Nan Tien Temple on a double decker bus, it was very interesting. When we got there we were introduced to our tour guides Bob and Dianne. The first thing we did was listen to information about the temple and then we participated in Tai Chi, which was a very soothing and relaxing activity. After that we had fried rice and potato wedges for lunch, it was delicious! After lunch we went to a museum where we learnt about Buddhism. Then we went to a big bell called the Gratitude Bell, which was up a very steep hill. Soon enough it was time for home. I had a great day!



**By Breanna- Year 3**



On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November, Stage Two went to the Nan Tien Temple in Wollongong. In the temple grounds there was a building called the Main Shrine. Inside the Main Shrine there were five statues of Buddha, which represented five different meanings. On the walls of the Main Shrine there were 10,000 Buddha's that were all the same. Also, on the ceiling there was a hand painted artwork of a Buddha angel and a beautiful chandelier hanging from the ceiling. This was my favourite part of the day. We had a great day at the Nan Tien Temple.

**By Lachlan- Year 4**

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November, Stage Two travelled to the Nan Tien Temple in Wollongong on a double decker bus. My favourite part of the day was when we got to ring the Gratitude Bell and run around on the hill, it was great fun!

**By Rapha- Year 3**

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November Stage Two went to the Nan Tien temple, which was a two hour drive from Penrith to Wollongong. When we got there our two tour guides met us and went through some rules. Their names were Bob and Dianne. At the temple we did Tai Chi, ate fried rice and potato wedges, rang a large bell called the Gratitude Bell and visited some beautiful buildings. One of the buildings we went into was called the Main Shrine or Hero Hall. In this room there were beautiful hand painted artworks and we had to take our shoes off to show respect. This excursion was great and well worth it!

**By Elle- Year 3**



# Correspondence

Correspondence which has been sent home in the past fortnight or with this newsletter includes:

- ☺ Christmas Celebration
- ☺ Christmas Celebration and Feast Day
- ☺ Swimming Carnival
- ☺ Time Capsule Inclusion
- ☺ Understanding your child's report



## Christmas Raffle Donations

### A & T Direct Excavations (A&T Wamsley)

2 x \$50 Smiggle Vouchers  
Christmas Platter & Lolly Jar

### Penrith RSL

Voucher for 2 at Star Buffett

### Penrith Golf & Recreation Club

18 Holes of golf for 4 adults including  
2 motorised carts

### Lakeside Restaurant

\$100 Dinner Voucher

### Australian National Maritime Museum

Family Pass

### Penrith Gaels Club

Dinner Voucher

### Museum of Fire

2 Family Passes

### Featherdale Wildlife Park

2 Adult Tickets

### Penrith Paceway

Dinner Voucher

## Teachers are Learners Too!

Congratulations to Mrs Lennon who graduated last night from her first year of training in Reading Recovery. I was like a proud parent watching her receive her award.

Mrs Smith and Miss Joseph attended a day about the new Science and Technology syllabus. This syllabus will be implemented next year. They shared their knowledge and led the staff in an informative professional learning meeting last week.

Throughout this year all staff have been learning about and how to use the new English, Mathematics and Science syllabi. We have implemented the new expectations in English and Mathematics. Next year we will be implementing Science and Technology as well as developing our learning about the new History syllabus. For further information there is a new parents guide about the curriculum on the following website: <http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/support-materials/parents-guide/>



## EXTRA CURRICULAR

### ICAS Maths

Congratulations to all our students who participated in the ICAS Mathematics Assessment.

Distinction - Alex Masic,

Credit - Brendenn Powell, Michaela Merkas,

Participation - Pino Jahn, Harrison Walker, Matthew Busine, Lachlan Becroft, Nathan Luk, Joel Stevens, Molly Walker

## REPORTS

There is a note accompanying the newsletter today that explains the grading scale that constitutes a part of your child's report. Reports will be sent home next Thursday 11th December. Please contact your child's teacher if there is anything you would like to discuss in regards to your child's progress before the end of the year.

## Beginning of year assessments

The beginning of year assessment interviews are taking place on Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th January 2015. These assessments are compulsory for all students to attend. If you have not already booked a time for your child please go to [schoolinterviews.com.au](http://schoolinterviews.com.au) and enter the code **9HBW3**.

Bookings close on Sunday 7th December at 5pm. Please note that if bookings are not made by this time, time-slots will then be allocated by the school.

