Dear Parents of Holy Family,

This weekend we celebrate the First Sunday of Advent, and in doing so we move into a new liturgical year. We give thanks for the blessings of the year just gone and begin with the joy of waiting and preparing for the coming of the Christ child.

Advent is preparation time for the coming of Christ at Christmas, when we are invited to accept Christ, not only into the world, but into our personal lives. Too often our preparations are tied up getting the decorations ready, the presents, the food, the family’s social calendar. This year let us look at this in another way:

**Decorations** – let us decorate ourselves with thoughts for those around us; what can I decorate another’s life with? What colour and light can I bring to others?

**Presents**- let us be present to those around us. Can we give someone the gift of our **presence**- some time doing something for them, or just taking time to talk rather than rushing off to buy something else?

**Food**- have we prepared ourselves for the life giving eternal food of receiving Christ in the Eucharist this Christmas? This food has the cheapest cost we will expend – but the greatest nourishment!

**Social Calendar**- in amongst the family dinners and parties have we set aside time to party with Christ? Will we be attending Mass each Sunday of Advent to get ready for Christmas?

Journeying with Christ is a life-long journey that leads to joy and peace. And so, in these four weeks of Advent let us take this journey with Christ first, and worry about the consumerism second.

Yours in family,

Mrs. Sue Guilfoyle
Principal

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END OF YEAR

**REMINDERS**

1. Please inform the office if you know that your children will not be attending HFS in 2014. Remember – financial difficulties are not a reason to change schools as support is available. Please make an appointment to discuss any concerns with Mrs Guilfoyle.

2. School concludes Wednesday 18th December.

3. After a three year phase in period, from 2014, all students will be required to wear the navy & gold sport shirt. The Year 6 2014 students will not need to buy this navy shirt as they will receive their white Yr 6 shirt in Term 1.
Scripture Reflection - Sunday, 1 Dec 2013: First Sunday of Advent - Year A

The first Sunday of Advent sees the commencement of the new liturgical year. This new liturgical cycle is referred to as Year A and features the gospel of Matthew. (Year B features the gospel of Mark and Year C, that we have just completed, features the gospel of Luke.) Advent comes from the Latin word *Adventus*, which literally means ‘coming’. So Advent is our time of preparing and anticipating the coming of Christ into the world that we celebrate in the Nativity at Christmas.

In this Sunday’s Gospel Jesus uses the story of Noah and the flood to highlight the message of being ready for ‘when the Son of Man comes.’ So while we do not need to take a trip to Bunnings and buy materials for an ark we do have a lot to do to get ready other than Christmas shopping. We need to make sure we take time to listen to the word of God and give yourself quiet time to reflect on what God requires of us.

Community Christmas Celebration

On Thursday 5th December our Holy Family community are invited to gather for a Christmas celebration of dance and song to mark the end of our 75th Anniversary year. Each grade has prepared a performance item as part of the dance / drama work with Mrs Kirkness. Information will be distributed this week about the simple clothing required for the performances.

Where: School Playground
When: Thursday 5th December 6:00-7:30pm
Bring: Fold up chairs

The school canteen will be open on the evening for those families who wish to purchase drinks, snacks or a quick dinner.

Bring all the family along for a special evening.

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Student Awards

We congratulate this week’s Student of the Week Award recipients:

Sebastian El Katrib  Montell Kumar
Samira Khoury   Mansour El Boutty
Norm Nakhoul   Joe Arida
Michael Rbeiz   Sam Georges
Alex Lehnen   Anthony Spina
Georgina Youssef   Janelle Sallit
Fahad Ageez   Talisha Ivory

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Religious Education Matters

Scripture Reflection - Sunday, 1 Dec 2013: First Sunday of Advent - Year A

As in the day of Noah...... the flood came and swept them away. Mat. 24:39

2013 - Celebrating 75 Years of Catholic Education at Holy Family School
Learning at Holy Family

Year 6 Science

In Science, Year 6 have been learning about microorganisms. We borrowed microscopes from Delany College and looked at different substances such as a human artery, nerves, hair, blood, sand and sugar. We thought the hair was unusual because it looked like a clear tube with water around it.

We also did an experiment about the different affects of mould on bread. There were five different types of bread: white, multi-grain, wholemeal, flat bread and raisin bread. The wholemeal bread grew the most mould because it contains the least preservatives. The bread that grew the least amount of mould was the white bread because of the amount of preservatives in it. One unusual thing that happened to the flat bread was that it grew no mould but crumbled into small pieces at the bottom of the bag. This is because it contains little to no yeast.

Our final experiment was to take a petri dish, filled with agar (a substance that grows mould) and take a swab of something. We wiped the swab onto a section of a petri dish to observe the changes that occur.

By Grace and Christopher

PARENT SURVEY 2013

Thank you to the 60 families who completed our Parent Feedback Survey, our best return rate in four years, with 30% of families responding. The overwhelming majority of families agree with the school’s directions in the areas of:

- Religious Education
- Teaching & Learning
- School Community
- Parent Involvement
- Community Engagement
- Initiatives

Comments included:
- Thank you for all that you offer and provide for our children.
- I am proud to say my children attend Holy Family. I have always felt welcomed and my children love coming to school.
- More focus needed in general mathematics...helping with NAPLAN.
- Parent trip to Mary Mackillop Place was amazing & beautiful—well done!
- I feel that Holy Family is a very safe environment...his teachers are always there for him.
- I am really happy with Holy Family School, it has improved lots.

Some parents were uncertain of the impact that our school fundraising in 2013 had on reducing the Swimming Program costs. Here are the numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Total of Council &amp; Bus Fees</th>
<th>Amt Families Paid</th>
<th>Saving to Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$73:40</td>
<td>$65:00</td>
<td>$8:40 / child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$79:50</td>
<td>$70:00</td>
<td>$9:50 / child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see from the figures above, our fundraising and school subsidies, continue to reduce costs paid by families. The Swimming Program was reduced to eight days in 2012 to also keep prices down for families, but with no loss of teaching for students - we insisted on quicker assessment of groups and the ceasing of the last day ‘fun day’. If you have any further questions on these charges please contact Mrs Guilfoyle.

The winner of our prize drawer for returning the survey is the Korkmaz Family (Roni Yr 5) who will receive a $125 credit on their school resource fees in 2014.
November

Thursday 28th November  Year 1 Excursion to Sydney Opera House.
Friday 29th November  9.10am Parish Mass—Year 3 & 5 attending.
                     2.00pm Whole School Assembly— Kinder, Yr 2, Yr 4 & Yr 6.
Monday 2nd December  1st Week of Advent.
Wednesday 4th December End of Year Reports sent home.

Happy Birthday!

We congratulate Brayden Vu, Rhiannon Downes, Montell Kumar, Chantel Owusu, Doung Mawien, Ivana Nehme, Charbel Nehme, Christina Awad and Sindy Fosita who celebrate their birthdays this week!

Library News

Dear Parents and Children
This is the last week for borrowing from the library. Next week (2nd Dec), all books are due back to the library so we can continue with our stocktake. It is important, particularly for Year 6 students, that all books are returned as the computer keeps a record of over due books and this is carried into the next year. If you have lost or damaged a book, please let us know. Children will be given overdue book notices in the coming weeks so please search your shelves and return the library books.

All lost books will incur a $10 replacement fee as this help purchase a replacement book (although it does not cover the entire cost of a new book). Thank you for your help.

It has been great to see so many enthusiastic readers throughout the school and so many children enjoying the library at many different times during the day.

Happy holiday reading
Mrs Ardus & Mrs Gordon

Community News

Complete our Catholic Education survey on school communication

Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta is conducting a system-wide survey on school communication. The survey is open to all school and Catholic Education Office (CEO) staff and parents in our schools.
We are seeking your feedback by completing the online survey which takes about 8 – 20 mins (depending on your responses).
To encourage wide participation there will be a Prize Draw for individual participants and one prize for the highest school participation.
- Individuals (staff and parents) who opt into the Prize Draw have the chance to win one of 10 x $50 iTunes gift card; 10 x $50 Visa gift cards or 20 x Double Passes to Hoyts.
The school with the highest participation as a percentage of population will win 5 new iPads.

The survey is available via http://bit.ly/1fFfjF8 and is open until 6 December, 2013

2013 - Celebrating 75 Years of Catholic Education at Holy Family School