Dear St Michael’s Families and Friends

The children and staff celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass at the Parish Church yesterday. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent originated in the early days of the Church as a time of preparation for Easter, when those who wished to become members of the Church were instructed in the faith and prepared for Baptism.

Traditionally this has been a time to ‘give something up’. You often hear that people are giving up chocolate, desserts and alcohol! Whilst this may improve our physical health, you have to wonder how it might help our spiritual well-being? If we have to give something up maybe it should be to give up gossiping about others or only looking at the negative side of a situation? Or maybe we can take up something? Going to Mass, praying with our children, putting ourselves in others shoes before judging them or showing compassion to those we find hard to like? For each of us the forty days of Lent provides an opportunity to examine the reality of our lives and plant seeds of change and new growth. It can be a time of healing, renewal and recommitment.

I encourage each family to take on a special commitment for this time of Lent. Let us all develop our theme for this year and ‘put on love’, as we remember to ‘do’ something for others rather than ‘give up’ something for ourselves. Let’s recall the words of Jesus: “I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mathew 25:40). This should be a reminder to us that Jesus dwells in those around us, especially the needy, downtrodden and the despised.

Yours in Partnership

Judy

GONSKI REVIEW INTO FUNDING FOR SCHOOLING

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) has provided the following response to the release of the Gonski review of funding. I have also attached to the email a series of Parent Questions and Answers for your information. Further information can be found at the NCEC website http://www.fundinginfo.catholic.edu.au/. The release of the Gonski Review into Funding for Schooling on 20th February represents the first step in the Australian Government’s plan to introduce a new funding system for all Australian schools from 2014.

There is no doubt that the review is significant and comprehensive, but it provides only a theoretical framework for a new funding model—key questions remain unanswered.

Substantial analysis needs to be done to test the model and recommendations before a sound assessment can be made of what this means for our schools.

The government has announced a consultation phase, including analysis and testing of the proposed model, to commence immediately. This work will be used to help define a concrete funding model.

The government also acknowledged in their response to the review that families face financial pressures and do not wish to see school fees rise beyond their reach.

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) will be working hard during the consultation phase to ensure we do not end up with a model that has the potential to put pressure on school fees.

School funding reform of the magnitude suggested by the Gonski review cannot occur without adequate funding.

The NCEC strongly backs the review’s call for an additional $5 billion in funding for all schools—this represents less than one half of 1% of Australia’s gross domestic product (GDP)—and has called on government’s to commit to increased funding sooner rather than later.

There’s a lot of work to be done over the coming months. The NCEC will be actively working for the interests of our school communities and will keep communities updated throughout the consultation phase.

Further information: A full copy of the Gonski Report can be accessed from the Your School Our Future website www.schoolfunding.gov.au
COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORNER
The School Community Council hosted an open meeting for all parents on Tuesday and then the new Council members held the first of the Council meetings for the year. We express our thanks to the few additional parents who attended and shared their thoughts with the group. There were some great new ideas presented which should help streamline some of our activities. Thank you also to the many families who have returned their commitment form and for your generosity. The lists will be placed on the windows for other families to add their names should they have forgotten to return their forms. This is a great start to sharing the load! **One item of discussion was the celebration of the 30th year of education at St Michael’s. Please stay on the lookout for regular information updates as the planning gets underway. If you have particular information that you believe would be of relevance to this event, please contact me at the school.**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST MICHAEL’S

Yesterday we gathered as a community for Ash Wednesday Mass with our Whole school at 9.45. It was lovely to see a good number of family members sharing with their children in this Mass as we build community together.

Father Peter has asked us to engage in our Lenten preparation by ensuring our children are familiar with the prayers of the Church; The Our Father, the Gloria and responses we use during the Mass. We will work on these with your help on our journey to Easter. Along with this we are asked to consider our contribution to Project Compassion. Watch out for your family boxes being sent home this week.

"Grace is at the heart of our Christian experience. Without it we are nowhere... We must allow God into our hearts and lives."
Archbishop Mark Coleridge - 2012

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

**SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2012**
Advance notice for our Sacramental dates for 2012:

- **Eucharist** - Sunday 3rd June
- **Confirmation** - Sunday 12th August, 11am
- **Reconciliation** - Thursday 8th November

Specific details will be sent directly to the classes involved.

All families are always welcome to attend these community celebrations.

IMPORTANT MESSAGES

CAR PARK SAFETY
Please remember that the staff car-park (directly in front of the main building) is out of bounds for parent parking. You are requested to park on the basketball court area to ensure that cars are not moving around the area where the families need to walk. This is for the safety of all children at St Michael’s. **Please don’t put your convenience ahead of the value of a child’s life.**

UNIFORM
Thank you for your efforts in sending the children to school in the correct uniform. Please help your children remember that the uniform colours and requirements need to be followed. Hair decorations – they should blue or black and be an appropriate style for school wear; sport shoes must be white, school shoes must be black school shoes. It is also important that earrings are plain studs or small sleepers with nothing attached to them. This is a safety rule. Thank you for working with us on this matter.
ST MICHAEL’S SWIMMING CARNIVAL
Notes for the Swimming Carnival are slowly coming back. This year it will be held at Big Splash on Friday, 9th March, 2012. Children eight years and older need to nominate the events they wish to compete in. Please talk with your child about the events and help them decide as no changes / late entries will be accepted after the closing date, which is Monday, 27th February. **Please Note** that the students may only swim in either the 25metre or 50metre events (not both). Non-swimmers will participate in novelty events. The slides will not be in use on the day. Children need to wear hats, protective clothing and sunscreen. They will need to bring snacks as well as their lunch and plenty to drink. **The kiosk will not be open.** Thank you to the parents who have nominated to assist on the day. We are also in need of a parent to transport some equipment to the pool. Please see Jo Pelle if you are able to assist. Finally, please be aware that any parent that is not a helper on the day is asked to pay a $5.00 entry fee as well as any siblings attending.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SOCCER CARNIVAL
Thank you to the many students who have returned their notes. We have managed to nominate 3 Year 3/4 teams and 2 Year 5/6 teams. The carnival will be held on Sunday March 18th at the University of Canberra. In the coming weeks notes will go home to all the students involved regarding any training and arrangements for the day. Thank you again to all the parents that have volunteered to coach or manage a team.

VERTI-COOL CHALLENGE
Tomorrow is the day!!! Congratulations to the students from St Michael’s that have entered. Good luck to the St Michael’s staff team who have also entered a team. Please look at [http://www.mycampquality.org.au/verticool](http://www.mycampquality.org.au/verticool) for running times. We are looking forward to a great afternoon.

Till next edition, stay healthy.

MORE IMPORTANT MESSAGES

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT
Unfortunately we are unable to have a teacher supervising the school equipment before or after school; hence we have instructed the children that they are NOT permitted to play on the equipment even if their parent is present. It is not public equipment so there is a conflict of responsibility when staff are on the premises. I appreciate your understanding and cooperation, thank you.

FAMILY DETAILS
It is essential for the safety of all your children that the school has current contact details for parents /carers and an emergency contact; as well as any relevant medical alert information. If you are yet to return your details form to the front office, please do so as soon as possible to ensure we can contact you if required. Please contact Lisa in the office if you require another copy of the form. Thank you.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
Special wishes to those children that celebrate their birthday this week: Joel 3T, Charlotte 3T, Tom 4M, William KT, Blake 6H, Janet 6H, Izabella 1/2H & Hayley 3/4RM
We hope you have a great day!

ENVIRONMENTAL TIP
Use less hot water:
- Install a Triple A-rated water efficient shower rose or flow control washer
- Avoid using only small amounts of hot water at a time
- Fix leaking hot water taps to reduce your hot water bill and save on greenhouse gases
- Consider gas or solar water heating when building or renovating
St Michael’s Parish
Contact Details and Mass Times
Parish Priest: Father Peter HA, N. Doai
Address: Tyrrell Circuit, Kaleen, ACT 2617
Telephone: (02) 6241 3364
Fax: (02) 6241 0747
Email: stm.kaleen@cg.catholic.org.au
Weekend Mass Times:
Saturday: 6.00pm, Sunday: 9.00am and 5.30pm

ST VINCENT DE PAUL DOORKNOCK APPEAL
St Michael Conference is looking for collectors to assist in its annual doorknock during February in the Kaleen, Giralang & North Lyneham suburbs.
The purpose of the doorknock is to raise funds to assist those in need in our community. If you can spare a couple of hours and would like to assist please contact Ted Smith on 6241 7432 or 0411 106 295.

RE MINDERS !!!
SCHOOL PHOTOS: Photo’s will be taken on Wednesday 28th March; envelopes will come home shortly. ALL envelopes need to be returned to the front office before photo day. Thanks.

KIND E R G A N T E E N H E A L T H C H E C K’S: Kindy Health Check’s will be carried out on Tuesday 1st May (Term 2—Week 1). Envelopes have already gone home, could they please be returned to the front office with your child’s name on the front of the envelope by 9th March.

HEAD LICE: Please remember to check your child’s hair for head lice and to ensure that they have their own hat at school, hats borrowed from the front office carry the risk of spreading head lice.

CYB E R S A F E T Y USE AGREEMENT FORMS: These forms need to be returned to the school as soon as possible otherwise your child will not be able to have access to the computers and IPADS.

ST MICHAEL’S NOTICE BOARD
DANCECORE
Every WEDNESDAY lunchtime
Call Cassie 0417 442 750

GUITAR
Please contact Sam Strano
0408 196 855

PIANO
Please contact Mary-Liz Patridge
0413 425 753

SPEECH & DRAMA
Please call Elizabeth McIntosh on 6255 9054.

RE M I N D E R
If your child has a private lesson booked and is unable to attend due to illness or a school excursion, could you please contact the appropriate person to enable them to reschedule your lesson or accommodate another student.

SCHOOL BANKING
OPENING ACCOUNTS FOR SCHOOL BANKING-GREAT NEWS!
School Banking accounts can now be opened at any Commonwealth Bank. You no longer need to complete application forms and return them to school. Just go to any branch and ask to open a Youthsaver account for school banking.

Take in identification for you and your child (such as drivers license and birth certificate) and you will receive your Dollarmite wallet on the spot, it is that easy! If you are a commonwealth Bank Customer with Netbank you have the option to open the account on line as well!

From January 2012 when children make their first deposit they will get their first token and our school will also receive $5.00 commission.

Thank you for supporting our school and teaching your child good saving skills.

Lois Griffiths
School Banking Co-Ordinator on behalf of The Commonwealth Bank.

YMCA OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS
After School Care is offered to St Michael’s by the YMCA; they now operate Monday to Friday from 3pm to 6pm. For a casual or permanent booking please phone 6230 0165 or Email: oshc.admin@ymca.org.au

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C A N T E E N - Call Maria Cavalli on 6241 5780 or e-mail cavalli@grapevine.com.au to join the canteen team.

Wk 4  Wednesday 29/2  Thursday 1/3  Friday 2/3
Cristina Simoncini  Julie Raccosta  Natalie Modric, Penelope Malu
Amanda Andriolo, Rebecca Cameron

Wk 5  Wednesday 7/3  Thursday 8/3  Friday 9/3
Juliet Zeiler  Jeanette Jelfs  Swimming Carnival

Wednesday & Thursday: 10.50am – 1.30pm  Friday: 9.00 am – 11.15am and 11.15am – 1.45pm