On Sunday we celebrated the first Sunday of Advent. Here is a reflection to ponder upon as we enter this busy season.

Advent Amid the Gift Wrap

"Are you ready for Christmas?" asked a guy I see at the train station every day. I thought of the long list of gifts I still needed to buy and the calendar crammed with holiday events and parties, and I shook my head. "Hardly," I said, and we both laughed knowingly.

On my train ride downtown I turned off my iPod and let my mind ponder that question a little deeper. "Am I ready for Christmas?" This time I thought about the meaning of the holiday — the Son of God coming to earth to dwell among us and show us the way to eternal life. Again I shook my head and murmured to myself, "Hardly."

It was then that I vowed to take advantage of every opportunity to prepare my heart for the coming of the Christ Child into the world — the world you and I live in.

What I discovered was that if we know what we're preparing for, everything we encounter on the way to Christmas can prepare us for the coming of Christ, not only in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago but also into our homes, our families, our workplaces, and our communities. The usual December distractions can instead become holy moments when we find the Christ Child in our midst.

Having the right attitude and perspective on the Season will help you and your family avoid the excesses that make certain Christmas preparations frantic, yet draining and disappointing. As theologian John Shea says, "The task seems to be the delicate one of learning to make the customs and traditions of Christmas serve the Spirit."

Take a look at some of December's demanding activities with new eyes, eyes that fully expect to find God in every moment of this season of hope.

**Giving Tree**

As we wait in joyful hope may we also bring some hope and joy to those in need. Let us open our hearts to those who are not so lucky by offering a gift to the Giving Tree.

The Giving Tree One is one of the most special things we do as a whole school. The tree is set up in the front entrance until the final week of school. Please give thought to placing an offering to those in need under the tree; maybe a toy, a small gift or even some food or a blanket.

**Friday 12th December, 6.00 pm Graduation Ceremony** — all children are asked to attend this special event to acknowledge the Year 6's graduation from primary school.

**Wednesday 17th December, 10.00 am End-of-Year Mass** — families are invited to attend this whole school Mass to celebrate the achievements of this year.
Dear Parents

The End of Year Picnic will be taking place this year with the children going to Woodlands Park on Tuesday 16th December from 9.30am to 12.30pm. We will be combing a chance to play at the park, share a snack together and cheer on the Year Five Billy Cart Race that will commence at 11.30am. Parents are most welcome to come along – bring a picnic rug and join in the fun. Children will be returning to school at around 12.45pm – weather permitting.

At this time of year we frequently have parents anxious about teacher and class groupings for next year. Mostly these fears are unfounded. The teachers, based upon their knowledge of the children, allocate them a class using a detailed process. Factors that the school rates highly in this exercise are not necessarily the same as parents. You need to trust that your child will be placed in an appropriate group, as attempting to intervene on your child’s behalf is often counter-productive to his/her interests. It is inevitable that some parents and children will be disappointed, but it is worth remembering that resilience is built in children through the lessons of disappointment and how these are handled.

PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING
There will be a PA meeting Monday 8th December 7.30 pm in the Staffroom. We are keen to have a strong turn out of interested parents at this meeting so we can complete the election of an Executive for 2015. Currently vacant are the position of President and Vice President, so if you are willing to consider helping out with this vital role for our school community then please come along.

DOES YOUR FAMILY HAVE AN ANZAC STORY?
Our school community must have some wonderful ANZAC stories. I would love to display these in the school next year. If you have a story to jot down and send along to school, it will be a valuable learning experience for our students. Copies of photos or documents you would be willing to share would also be fantastic.
If you have anything to contribute, even just one photo, it would be gratefully received and respectfully displayed.
Please help us to make our ANZAC stories live on.
Please contact Shane Byrne or Frances Williams if you have any questions.

GRADUATION CEREMONY - FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM
It is an expectation that ALL STUDENTS attend this ceremony and need to wear their summer school uniform except for Year Six students who are asked to wear Confirmation quality clothing. Students will be seated in their class groups and need to meet their class teacher in the CHURCH NOT LATER THAN 5.45 PM. Year Six Students will process into the Church. Following the ceremony, students will be dismissed from a location outside the Church. Please ensure you inform your child’s teacher that you have taken your child.

END OF YEAR MASS
Whole school End of Year Mass of Thanksgiving will be held on Wednesday 17th December at 10.00am. ALL PARENTS ARE INVITED TO JOIN WITH US AT THIS SPECIAL CELEBRATION.

LIBRARY BOOKS
Library borrowing has ceased. We would appreciate all books being returned as soon as possible as it is an immense job to stocktake all books.
The children still have use of their Classroom Library until the end of the year.
Many thanks for your co-operation.
Jeanette Pearson and Liz Piccione
FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP
Is anyone who provided a meal/dessert for the Family Support Group missing dishes??
A rectangle metal tray 23 x 30 cm and a Décor 4L rectangle plastic container with lid
are available for collection from the school office.

AWARDS INFORMATION
Please find listed below the names of those children receiving awards on WEDNESDAY 17TH
DECEMBER
in the Hall at 11.30 am

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWARDS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep Blue</td>
<td>Prep Gold</td>
<td>Prep Green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Blue</td>
<td>Four Gold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jesse Bates</td>
<td>Sebastian La Bruna Ciel Whittaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Blue</td>
<td>One Green</td>
<td>One Gold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Blue</td>
<td>Four Gold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charlie Rio</td>
<td>Benjamin Davies Hannah Malkoun Max Saifert Ethan Kirk Karsha Pereira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Blue</td>
<td>Two Gold</td>
<td>Three Blue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Benjy Tarr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Gold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hannah Pless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCHOOL FEES FOR 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>$515.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>$515.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>$515.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levy Type</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL $1845.00 per Annum (This is a Family Fee) (Billed over 3 Terms)

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT LEVY

(Covers classroom requisites and excursions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Levy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Two</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Three</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Four</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Five</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Six</td>
<td>$410.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On Friday 21st November, Steve Haylock from Melbourne City Mission presented certificates to Oliver Jones, Blake Jones, Sam Hengel, Harry Johnstone and Max Johnstone for their wonderful efforts in raising money for the homeless.

2015 BOOK COLLECTION
Please note that collection of 2015 books is as follows:
Tuesday 9th December 8.00am – 11.00am and 3.00pm – 4.00pm
Uncollected orders on this day will be returned to Campion and can be collected from the store, but additional changes will apply.

HOOPTIME GRAND FINAL DAY
A group of 10 girls from grade 5 & 6 have been competing in McDonald’s Hootime Basketball competition against teams for all over Victoria. We were in the Senior All Star Girls Division. We made it to the State Grand Final Day and went to Dandenong Stadium on 25th November to complete. We played 6 very tough matches and won 4 of them. A couple of them were really close in scoring and we had to play really well to win. We lost our last match and overall come in 6th place. Around 450 girls teams competed across the State so we are very proud of ourselves to make it so far. It was very exciting and fun for all of us. We wouldn’t have done so well if wasn’t for Tyson Harrington who coached us and for Fred Vitale helping him and Nadia Vitale being our manger. We also had very loud and enthusiastic support from our parents. We would like to thank all of them and Mrs Graham of helping us participate. Girls who were in the team were Ally Keating, Annabelle Montgomery, Eimear Noonan, Stephanie Dugo, Bianca Jones, Grace Harrington, Kayla Vitale, Ruby Allison, Isabella Cook and Taylah Scott.
BY Bianca Jones and Isabella Cook

CONGRATULATIONS
Karsha Pereira (6 Blue) has qualified for the Victorian State Swimming Championship being held on 13th December- 18th December.

We wish her all the best.
SAVE THE DATE

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all parent helpers who contributed to our school community throughout this year with a morning tea which will be held on Wednesday 10th December at 11.00 am in the Kirinari Centre.

REPLY SLIP

Name: ELDEST CHILD

Please return by 5th December 2014

Maths Puzzles

Well done to everyone who had a go at solving the latest maths puzzles, the answers are below. The Maths Leaders will come to your classes to give out the prizes.

Miss Pringle – Mathematics Coordinator & Year 6 Maths Leaders

Prep – Year 2 - Four Colours

Well done to Isaac Hengel and Laura Barnes for submitting these solutions!

Year 3 – Year 6 - Zios and Zepts

Possible solutions for the problem are:

15 Zios and 1 Zept
1 Zio and 7 Zepts
8 Zios and 4 Zepts
YEAR 7 2016 ST COLUMBA’S COLLEGE APPLICATIONS FOR ENROLMENT
Applications for Year 7 2016 at St Columba’s College can be lodged by contacting the College Registrar, Josie Zanic, on 9331 9128 or zanij@columbia.vic.edu.au to request that an application form be sent. Applications can also be downloaded from the College website at www.columbia.vic.edu.au
Applications for Year 7 2016 close on Friday 27th February 2015.

School Tours
Bookings for School Tours can be made via the website or contacting the Registrar.

YEARS 7 2016 SCHOLARSHIPS
St Columba’s College is offering a limited number of scholarships for prospective Year 7 2016 students. Details and online application are available on the College website at www.columbia.vic.edu.au Application closing date 6th March 2015.

Ave Maria College Enrolment Applications 2016
Applications for Enrolment for Year 7 2016 are currently being accepted by the College. All families, including families with another daughter currently enrolled at the College, must submit an Application for Enrolment. All applications are considered according to the criteria listed in the College Enrolment Policy.
Applications for Year 7 2016 close on 27 February 2015. Late applications are considered in order of receipt.
To organise a copy of the College Prospectus, organise a College tour or for further information, please contact the College Registrar, Ms Carmel Brewster on 9331 9308.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CALENDAR 2014
TERM FOUR
DECEMBER
3rd SCHOOL CLOSURE – STAFF PLANNING FOR 2015
9th COLLECTION OF BOOK ORDERS – SCHOOL HALL (8.30AM – 11.00AM AND 3.00PM – 4.00PM)
10th PARENT HELPER MORNING TEA (11.00AM KIRINARI CENTRE)
12th YEAR SIX GRADUATION – All students from all grades to attend
16th WHOLE SCHOOL PICNIC – WOODLAND PARK
17th WHOLE SCHOOL MASS – 10AM
YEAR SIX ASSEMBLY – 11.30AM HALL
END OF TERM FOUR – STUDENT DISMISSED AT 1.30 PM

2015 UNIFORM SHOP OPENING HOURS
Wednesday 28th January 10.00am-2.00 pm
Thursday 29th January 10.00am – 2.00 pm

2015 TERM DATES
TERM 1
Wednesday 28th January – Friday 27th March
Student return on Monday 2nd February
(Easter 3rd – 6th April)
TERM 2
Monday 13th April – Friday 26th June
TERM 3
Monday 13th July – Friday 18th September
TERM 4
Monday 5th October – Wednesday 16th December
SCHOOL HOURS 2015
MONDAY – FRIDAY
8.50AM – BELL – 3.30PM
RECESS
11.00AM – 11.30AM
LUNCH
1.30PM – 2.30PM
(1.30pm – 1.40pm Students eat their lunch under supervision)
AFTERNOON
2.30PM – 3.30PM

YMCA Children’s Services