

# ST MARK'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Seek and you shall find



## Newsletter 17th March 2022

Kia Ora, Welcome, Hello, Nǐ hǎo, Talofa Lava, Hallo, Salut, Namaste, Bonjour, Bula Vinaka, Guten Tag, Shalom, Ciao, おはよう (Ohayou), 안녕 Ahn Nyeong, Olá, Privet!, Xin Chào, Kia Orana, Malo e Lelei, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Sat Shari Akal, Melo Ni, Halo Ola Keta, Mauri, Fakaalofa Atu, Salam, Welkom.

### Key Dates

Date	What	Details
Monday 21 March	Junior school playground project to commence	
Tuesday 22 March	BOT Meeting	7pm via Zoom
Mon 11 - Fri 15 April	Holy Week	
Friday 15 April	Good Friday/ Last day of Term 1	School is closed
Monday 2 May	First day of Term 2	Welcome back for Term 2
Sunday 8 May	First session for Sacramental Preparation	3-5pm at St Mark's Parish Church

### COVID -19 OMICRON UPDATE

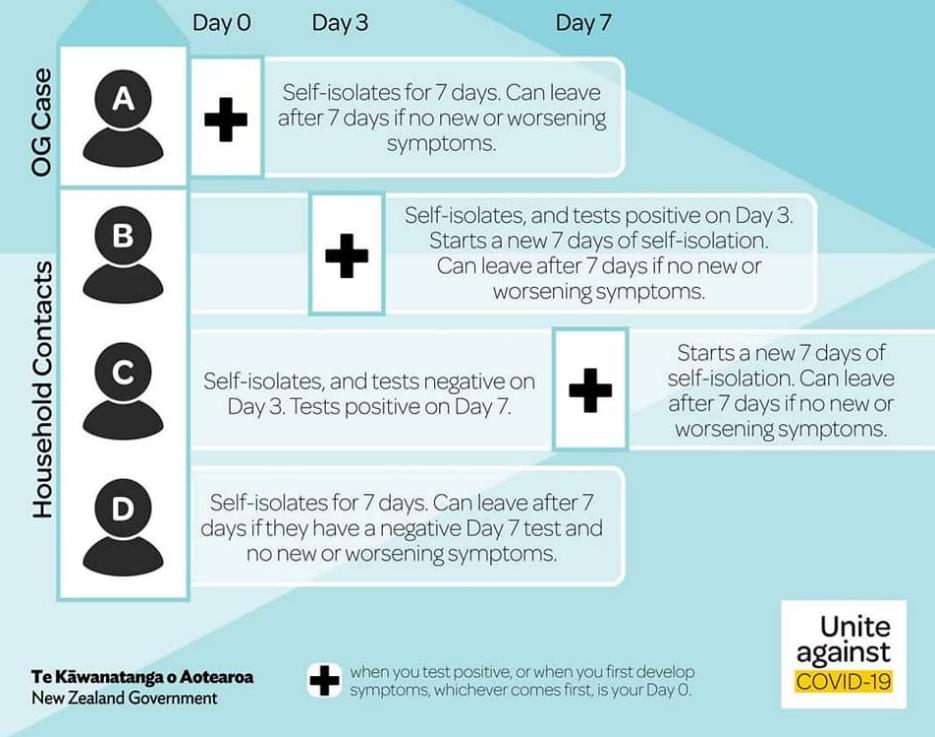
It is just wonderful to see those staff and students impacted by the virus (via testing positive or being a household contact) returning back to school. It seems the majority of positive cases connected to our school have been relatively mild. To date, there have been 26 students test positive for Covid (20 of whom have fully recovered) and 3 staff members (2 of whom have fully recovered).

Since the last newsletter, you will be aware that isolation periods have been reduced from 10 days to 7 days.

We would like to see ALL children attending school every day unless they are unwell or isolating. Whilst we have been asked to continue to be vigilant, we have also been advised to go about living our lives as normally as possible (with RED level restrictions being mostly about large gatherings indoors). Our school continues to have strict health and safety protocols in place and your child's safety and wellbeing at school remains a priority.

The image below may assist your family in understanding isolation requirements for household contacts, particularly when more than one person becomes infectious.

# Testing positive at different times



## Special Catholic Character

*A message from Mrs Beverley Dias-McAllum      Director of Religious Studies*

Today is St. Patrick's feast day. This Patron saint of Ireland was born in Britain. He belonged to an affluent family, however when he was about 14 years old, he was captured by pirates and taken as a slave to Ireland. He worked as a shepherd which provided him with the perfect opportunity to pray. Patrick already knew about the faith because his grandfather was Christian. After six years he ran away to Britain but was prompted to go back to Ireland. Prior to going to Ireland, he studied and became a priest and later became a bishop. When he went back to Ireland he converted thousands.

The reason a shamrock is associated with St. Patrick is because he used it to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity. He died on March 17, 461 AD which is why we celebrate his feast on this day.

His poem 'The Breastplate' is commonly known and recited:

Christ be within me  
 Christ behind me  
 Christ before me  
 Christ beside me  
 Christ to win me  
 Christ to comfort and restore me  
 Christ beneath me  
 Christ above me  
 Christ inquired  
 Christ in danger  
 Christ in hearts of all that love me  
 Christ in the mouth of friend and stranger.



## **Sacramental Programme**

In May, the Parish will commence its Sacramental programme. Students in Years 4-6 who have not yet received their first Eucharist and/or Confirmation, can be registered via this link:  
<https://stmarkspakuranga.org.nz/sacramental-form/>

## **40 days of Prayer for Lent - Parish initiative**

Throughout the lenten season, members of the Parish family share prayers for lent. Each day one prayer is selected to be shared with the wider community. Last week, these prayers, written by Team Whakatetere were circulated:

### **For Peace and Reconciliation in Families Nicholas - Rm 3**

O gracious God, may there be peace in families as these day are stressful with Covid.  
Some of us might get cranky and angry and take it out on other people.  
Help us not to hurt others and to apologise when we make others sad.  
Help us not to hold grudges and to forgive one another, so that we can live happily  
and in peace as a family. Amen

### **For Parents Room 1**

Eternal Father, Thank you for our parents.  
Please help the parents who are having a hard time at their workplace.  
Thank you for our parents who cook and clean for us, please keep them safe.  
Thank you for giving us parents that love and support us.  
Please help the parents who are poor and have no money. Amen

### **For Grandparents Ceana - Rm 2**

Almighty Father.  
Bless our grandparents who take care of us.  
Give them good health, happiness and long life.  
Keep your guiding hand over them always.  
to keep them safe especially at this time  
and help them with any difficulties.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

## **Message from the Principal**

Kia Ora St Mark's Catholic School whānau

My return to school this week has been fabulous. It is always lovely to 'meet and greet' your beautiful children each day and to hear their stories. Through my early morning korero with the children, I learned of three students who lost baby teeth and of two others who celebrated the arrival of baby siblings in my absence.

I have definitely noticed a number of 'lockdown babies' and pregnancies in our small community and this brings much joy, hope and happiness amidst the chaos and turmoil our world is presently experiencing. I sincerely hope all our lovely new mums and mummies-to-be are keeping safe and well.

Despite ongoing covid challenges and interruptions this first six weeks of the 2022 school year have been very productive and your hard working children are to be commended for their diligent efforts across the curriculum. Our inquiry focus of KOTAHITANGA (working together as one) is clearly evident through group work, team challenges, play, friendships and the fostering of positive peer relationships. Teachers are to be acknowledged and thanked for their hard work, creativity and agility in catering to different groups of learners who have been working in school, and at home, as we learn to adopt hybrid models of teaching and learning due to Covid isolation periods. We know that

when technology is used purposefully and well, it is a great enabler of visible, connected and ubiquitous learning and we are beginning to appreciate the importance of digital literacy and excellent communication in this evolving covid space.

At St Mark's we love to share many of the great things that are happening in our school. We use facebook and email to post timely school-wide 'news' and reminders. Classroom teachers communicate through SEESAW and email and you can expect regular updates. We endeavour to be as transparent and as clear as possible through our school's digitised communication platforms. Please remember, however, that you are always welcome to schedule a face2face, or 1-to-1 zoom appointment with myself or your child's teacher if you have any concerns, questions, suggestions or important information to share. We may be masked and socially distancing in 'RED' level, but these are not barriers to prevent those crucial learning partnerships. We want the best for YOUR child. We want the very best for EVERY child.

I extend thanks to those who managed to attend the 'meet the teacher' sessions via zoom recently. These types of meetings are not our preferred option and we do look forward to scheduling 1:1 school interviews in early Term 2 so we can share your child's most recent assessment information and progress towards learning goals. During the 'meet the teacher' sessions, classroom teachers will have shared school expectations around uniform, behaviour, communication and learning. Home-learning across the school will involve daily reading and/or vocabulary work (phonics, CODE rules, heartwords etc.) and mathematical activities (via SEESAW and/or on-line platforms) that complement and reinforce what students are learning in class. If your child does not have access to a computer at home and you would prefer some practice papers please make a request to your child's classroom teacher. The best learning at home however, goes beyond reading, writing and mathematics. Please encourage conversation about topical issues and embrace opportunities for learning through practical chores, play and sports or leisure activity. Holistic approaches to education encourage intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth. Do remember, if home learning causes undue stress (on all parties) it won't work - children and adolescents always learn best when they explore the things that interest them the most and it's absolutely okay in these formative years for young people to try things, not enjoy them and move onto something else.

Please remember to keep families of our school with relatives in Ukraine and Russia in your thoughts and prayers. It is increasingly difficult to watch this situation unfold and to see thousands of innocent citizens impacted. I offer prayers of solidarity, compassion, unity, freedom, comfort and peace.

Your friend in Christ  
Tracey Kopua

## **WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST LEARNERS**

An especially warm welcome to Jenalee (Room 10), Euan (Room 4) and Cairo (Room 4)

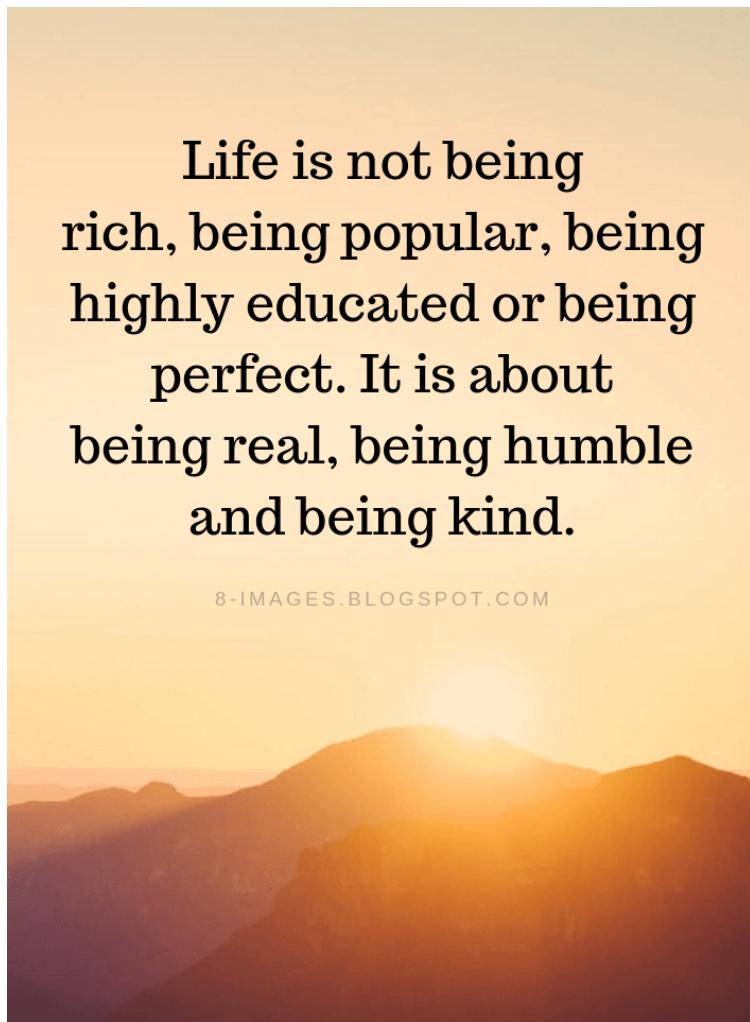


# *Following in the footsteps of Jesus* **At St Mark's Catholic School**

Learners at St Mark's are reminded to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. To encourage learners to do this, we reference our school's ABCs and 3Rs.

ABCs: A - Attitude; B - Behaviour; C - Care

3Rs: Respect for self; Respects for Others; Respect for the environment



## **REPORTING AN ABSENCE**

Please report absences to the school office through the school website:

<https://www.stmarks.school.nz/absences.html>

or by text to: 027 963 0100

or call: 09 576 5296

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