

ST MARK'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Seek and you shall find



Newsletter 23rd November 2021

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

KEY DATES

Date	What	Details
Tuesday 30 November	Year 5 and 6 Prizegiving	6.30pm via ZOOM
Friday 3 December	MUFTI day	Christmas Themed Mufti
Mon 6 - Thurs 9	Contactless Collection and book/resource amnesty	PTFA fundraising items and other items
Tuesday 7 December	BOT meeting	7pm via ZOOM
Wednesday 8 December	Thanksgiving Liturgy and Blessing of Year 6 Leavers	Via ZOOM time TBC
Friday 10 December	Last day of Term 4	School closes for ALL students at 12.30pm
Mon 13- Wed 15 December	Staff Only Days	Professional Learning and planning
Wed 15 December	2022 Class Lists and Stationery Lists	E-mailed home
Wednesday 2 February	First day of Term 1 2022	ALL STUDENTS

PTFA FUNDRAISER

Humblest thanks to those who supported our recent COOKIE TIME and VIBE DRINK fundraiser. Approx \$2600 was raised. This is an outstanding effort. Thank-you!

Special Catholic Character



This Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent. The Advent season is a time of preparation as we await the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas. Many Catholics celebrate Advent by putting up an Advent Wreath and lighting candles each week. The use of the wreath and candles during Advent are a longstanding Catholic tradition that was originally adopted by Christians in the Middle Ages as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolises the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.

The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the colour violet is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice. One candle is pink, because rose is the liturgical colour for joy.

The first candle, which is purple, symbolises **hope**. It is sometimes called the **Prophecy Candle** in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah. The second candle, also purple, represents **faith**. It is called the **Bethlehem Candle** as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The third candle is pink. It is called the **Shepherds Candle**. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the **joy** that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Saviour. This final candle, the **Angel's Candle**, symbolises peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels, **Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men**.

A message from the Principal

The school's reopening plan has gone so smoothly and I thank you for your ongoing support to ensure aspects of health and safety remain a priority in this current COVID space. The children and staff have absolutely loved being back onsite even though things are still a wee bit different for now (mask wearing, distancing, restricting access etc). You will appreciate the care and consideration our team has put into the 'NO MIX and MINGLE' strategy which gives greater peace of mind when there is still much COVID angst and uncertainty. Please continue to follow our school's plan which we anticipate will remain in place for the remainder of the 2021 school year. For families staying at home for now, we are thinking of you all. Please do communicate with the school if your plans change and you would like your child/ children to return to school. As more businesses open-up, we expect more families will require school care from 1.00-2.45pm. If this is the case, please email me directly so arrangements can be made: tkopua@stmarks.school.nz

In the week beginning Monday 6th December, we will provide opportunities for contactless collection and drop off. Families, staying home, will be able to collect items such as stationery/uniform that have been left at school throughout lock-down. Recent PTFA fundraising items (Cookies and Vibe drinks) will be available for those who made purchases and we ask that any school books or items belonging to the school be returned.

This is certainly not the way we expected our year to end and we know there have been obvious disappointments. We will however look forward to farewelling and celebrating our Year 6 children which we will do so via ZOOM so ALL have the opportunity to 'attend'.

More information will be emailed in the next few days.

Have a wonderful week!

Tracey Kopua