Dear Parents,

The Judean desert has traditionally been a place for Bedouins and a hiding place for refugees eg. David escaping Saul. Lying to the East of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, it is an array of arid hills and canyons falling from the mountain heights to the Dead Sea. The desert is a dangerous environment lacking in water and life – a land of barrenness and deprivation where one loses all sense of direction. It is also a land of profound silence that has haunted many seekers of a deeper spiritual life. John the Baptist emerges from the desert crying out for us to change our ways.

Many seekers of God have experienced an interior desert. No comfort of God’s presence; no certainty of where we are going; a silence that begets the question, “Where is God?” Preparation for Christmas can be a desert time for us as we cope with the demands of a consumerist society in the midst of a world of inequality, poverty and violence. We lose our way as we chase the next sale item. We forget which way leads to life. The voices of refugees coming from the Middle Eastern deserts today challenge us to change our priorities.

Then the Lord will truly come and be God with us, our Emmanuel.

Give me the Grace O Loving God, to hear the voices calling to me from the deserts of our world.

Show me how to change my ways and make you present in our world through compassion and generosity to those in need. Then this Christmas will truly be a celebration of Emmanuel. God is with us. Amen. (2nd Sunday Advent Matthew 3:3)

School Advisory Board Election - The School Advisory Board (SAB) plays an important role in student success and in creating a strong partnership between the school and the family by helping parents become actively involved in the education of their children. We are pleased more parents have expressed interest to join the School Advisory Board 2017 than vacancies (6 parent representative positions). As a result we are holding an extra ordinary general meeting on Wednesday, 15th February at 7:00pm to vote on the Board positions. Please note we are not accepting any further nominations and an announcement will be made in Contact. Should you have any questions, please contact Tina Costanzo, Secretary, Student Advisory Board on 0438 178 317

Congratulations - Emmerson-Dior Drake (3Y) has achieved four personal bests in Swimming Time Trials at Kings Swim School – Ferntree Gully and awarded a “4 Star” ribbon on Sunday November 20th, 2016. Well Done.

Year 6 Graduation - Will be on Friday 9th December, commencing with Mass at 6.00pm. Please note that Grade 6 students are expected to attend school until Friday 16th December when the school will be dismissed early at 1.15pm.

Prep 2017 - Last year prep children were given the opportunity to meet with their teacher and fellow students prior to commencing school the following year. The Orientation for the 2017 prep students will be on Wednesday 7th December from 9am to 10.30am. Therefore we ask the current preps to commence school at 11.15am on this day. Should this be difficult for you to arrange, the school will organise supervision for your child on this morning. Parents are asked to take their 2016 prep child straight to the classroom on this day at 11.15am. All prep parents will receive a letter regarding these details.

Extra Curricular Activities Term 4 Weeks 9 & 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 1st December</td>
<td>Assembly/ Advent Week 1 Liturgy (1 Blue) 2.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 2nd December</td>
<td>Anointing Mass 9.15am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 2nd December</td>
<td>Christmas Lunch – Last day Canteen 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 5th December</td>
<td>Advent Week 2 Liturgy (1 Yellow) 2.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 7th December</td>
<td>2017 Book Sales &amp; Levels Day for Prep to 6, 8.30am to 10.30am &amp; 1pm to 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 7th December</td>
<td>Prep 2017 Orientation 9am to 10.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 8th December</td>
<td>Pizza Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 8th December</td>
<td>Advent Week 3 Liturgy (5 Blue) 2.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 9th December</td>
<td>Year 6 Graduation Mass 6pm</td>
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School Reports – Will be sent home Wednesday 14th December.
Mel Court – At the end of this year our Year 6 teacher, Mel Court will be leaving us as she is expecting a baby in late January. We wish Mel and James all the very best for the new addition to their family.

Past Students 2011 – It gives me great pleasure to announce that two of our past students have been selected Leaders at Avila College next year, Sinead Coulter is School Captain and Eliza Giuliano is Music Captain. We wish these students a very successful and rewarding year in 2017.


Prep Music Christmas Concert - Will be held in the hall at 2.15pm on Tuesday 13th December for Prep R & Prep G and Wednesday 14th December for Prep B & Prep Y. Parents are welcome to attend.

The Good Manners Award goes to Jack Sarris (3R) and Uniform Award goes to Suzie Mei Jones (3B). Well done to these children.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Hesse
Principal

TERM 4 ENDS FRIDAY 16TH DECEMBER AT 1.15PM
TERM 1 RESUMES TUESDAY 31ST JANUARY FOR STUDENTS IN YEARS 1 TO 6
PREPS START GROUP A - THURSDAY 2ND FEBRUARY & GROUP B - FRIDAY 3RD FEBRUARY 2017

DATES TO REMEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday 1st Dec.</th>
<th>Assembly/ Advent Liturgy (1B) 2.30pm</th>
<th>Friday 9th Dec.</th>
<th>Year 6 Graduation Mass 6pm</th>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 3rd Dec.</td>
<td>Christmas Lunch – Last Day Canteen</td>
<td>Monday 12th Dec.</td>
<td>Advent Week 4 Liturgy (5Y) at 2.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday 4th Dec.</td>
<td>Advent – Week 2</td>
<td>Tuesday 13th Dec.</td>
<td>Prep R &amp; G Christmas Concert Hall 2.15pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 5th Dec.</td>
<td>Advent Week 2 Liturgy (1Y) 2.30pm</td>
<td>Wed. 14th Dec.</td>
<td>St Simon’s Orientation Yrs 1 – 6, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. 7th Dec.</td>
<td>Levies &amp; Book Sales Day</td>
<td>Wed. 14th Dec.</td>
<td>Prep &amp; Y Christmas Concert Hall 2.15pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. 7th Dec.</td>
<td>Prep 2017 Orientation 9am to 10.30am</td>
<td>Wed. 14th Dec.</td>
<td>Reports sent home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 8th Dec.</td>
<td>Advent Week 3 Liturgy (5 Blue) 2.30pm</td>
<td>Wed. 14th Dec.</td>
<td>Parish Pastoral Council Meeting 7.30pm</td>
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SCHOOL DIARIES: The Diaries that are included in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 Book Lists will be given out on the first week of school next year to those students who have ordered them as they hadn’t arrived from the supplier in time to be included in the Book Packs.

YEAR 2017 SCHOOL LEVIES

The deadline for payment is Wednesday 7th December 2016. PLEASE DON’T LEAVE PAYMENT TO THE LAST DAY. IF NOT POSSIBLE, PLEASE BE PREPARED TO WAIT IN THE QUEUE.
LEVIES FOR PREP TO YEAR 5 - $320 PER CHILD AND YEAR 6 - $340 PER CHILD. These levies can be paid from now on, don’t forget EFTPOS facilities are available.

For those parents who pay monthly please note that levies need to be paid by the due date. Next year’s instalment plan will be sent home in February.

JOKE OF THE WEEK

A sales rep, an admin clerk and the manager are walking to lunch when they find an antique oil lamp. They rub it and a genie comes out.
The genie says: “I’ll give each of you just one wish.” “Me first! Me first!” says the admin clerk. “I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat, without a care.”
“Pufff! She’s gone.
“Me next! Me next!” says the sales rep. “I want to be in Hawaii, relaxing on the beach with my personal masseuse, an endless supply of pina coladas and the love of my life.”
Pufff! He’s gone.
“OK, you’re up,” the genie says to the manager.
And the manager says: “I want those two back in the office after lunch.”

2017 BOOKLISTS

Collection Day for ordered books will be Wednesday 7th December between 8.30am and 10.30am and a 2nd session from 1pm to 5pm in the Lower Common Area (Years 1 to 2 Area).
BIRTHDAY WISHES

Wishing the following staff and students a very happy birthday.

Carmelina Corio
Ebonie Ferdinands (1G)
Cassandra Toskov (6G)
Gurveer Walia (6Y)
Charlotte Bugeja (2B)
Dante Muller (1B)
Kaya One (2G)
Paris Demetriou (2Y)
Thomas Macchi (3G)
Emma Spierings (6Y)
Tara Fonseka (2B)
Eoin Lacey (3B)
Ava Tamvakis (3R)

ST SIMON’S MUSIC TUITION: Now taking enrolments for 2017, Music lessons for Years 1-6, during the School day on a weekly rotating timetable. Instruments include acoustic guitar, electric guitar, singing, drums, keyboard / piano. Applications are available for collection from the office and must be returned by 16th December. Any questions relating to the program please call Paul Howard on 0405 689 757 or email phoward@sjawhthorn.catholic.edu.au

A reminder to Parents of the current students in the program, the End of Year Concert will be on Wednesday 14th December, refer to email sent out for times.

SWIMMING LOST PROPERTY: There is a collection of lost property from the swimming program in the office foyer. If the items are not collected by the end of term they will be donated to St. Vincent de Paul.

CDF BANKING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED URGENTLY: Helpers are required for the student banking that occurs every Thursday morning. Only 1 hour a week is all that is required.

CDF STUDENT BANKING: Please note the last day for student banking in 2016 will be Thursday 8th December. The first day for student banking in 2017 will be Thursday 9th February.

CANTEEN CHRISTMAS LUNCH: Canteen Christmas lunch ONLY tomorrow Friday 2nd December.


UNIFORM SHOP:

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday 6/12</td>
<td>Kathy W, Sylvia, Angela</td>
<td>2.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday 13/12</td>
<td>Narelle, Natasha, Kathy C</td>
<td>2.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday 30th January 2017</td>
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<td>10.00am to 1pm</td>
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UNIFORM SHOP NEWS:

- Girls Skorts are discontinued. Some quantities still available in sizes 4, 6, 14 and 16 only. Please order Sport Shorts as the alternative.

- The supplier of the fawn socks no longer makes them in Fawn size 7-11, and we have no more stock of size 7-11 on hand. Apologies – we are trying to source another supplier, but it is proving difficult.

- Also, they no longer supply single packs. Once the single packs we have on hand have sold, fawn socks will only be available in packs of 3. Price for 3 pack is $15.00.

- As of 22/11/16, we have no fawn 9-12 single packs, therefore these can only be purchased in packs of 3 for $15.00.

- Scrunchies have also been discontinued. Please order the Cool Clips range as an alternative.

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC): Enrolment form and Parent handbook are available on the school website under PARENTS/ OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE. Visit www.sssrowville.catholic.edu.au

SUPER SPEAK: Is Melbourne’s award winning public speaking & drama programme for 6 – 15 year olds, runs fun weekly classes for students to help them to develop confidence and skill in presentations, performance and everyday communication. Rowville classes are held on Monday afternoons. For more information, timetable and enrolments visit www.superspeak.com.au or call 9572 5249. Book now for 2017!

KINESIOLOGY THERAPY: Shadayah Tony offers Kinesiology as part of her holistic Natural Therapies. With a background in Psychology, Herbal Medicine and Nutrition, Shadayah uses light muscle testing to communicate with your body to determine what you need to feel balanced, healthy and at ease. Kinesiology restores flow within the energy centers of your body, to effectively help with: -improving focus, memory, coordination and clearing brain fog, -anxiety, stress, learning difficulty, -self sabotaging, -depression, -fatigue, -nutritional deficiency, and much more.

Located in Rowville, mother of 2, experienced life coach and now practitioner, bringing guidance and gentle treatment for children and adults. Change begins with you.

ROWVILLE KNIGHTS GIRLS’ FOOTBALL 2017: Do you want to play Girls’ Football in 2017? The Rowville-based Knights welcome all girls aged between 8 years to 16 years in 2017 to join our club. We fielded a successful U15 Girls team this year and will be adding more teams. Please register your expression of interest NOW and join our 6 week high performance training program starting in November 2016. Email rowvilleknights@gmail.com or contact head coach Brad – brad22siter@gmail.com 0418 325 018

ROWVILLE HAWKS - Free Girls & Boys Football Superclinic on Sunday 11th December: The Rowville Football Club is holding its annual Free Football Superclinic for Girls and Boys 7-14 yold on Sunday 11th December b/w 10:30am – Midday at Seebeck Oval in Rowville. There will be lots of activities for the kids including some fun Inflatables and fun skills/drills overlooked by the Eastern Devils Womens VFL Players and some AFL Womens Players too. There’ll also be prizes & giveaways too and all Girls will receive a free $100 registration voucher!

This Football Superclinic is free and open to everyone so to reserve a spot for your child(s) please click on https://membership.sportsTG.com/regform.cgi?formID=64308 and or visit http://rowvillefc.org.au/2016/11/17/fun-free-football-supercrunch/ for more info etc.
QUESTION OF THE WEEK

This is the one (John the Baptist) of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, ‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight’. (Matthew 3: 3)

Adults
What do you need to change so that others can learn from watching you that Christ walks among us?

Young People
What can you change about yourself this Advent to make the world a brighter place?

Children
What could you do so that others will see in you what it means to follow Jesus?
3:30pm – quick afternoon tea - biscuits and water

Thursday 8 and 15 December in Church 3:30pm

Practise:

Angels, Shepherds, Kings
Children to participate in the Nativity Play

Wanted:

Please bring a plate for shared supper after the Carols

Adult Choruses
Youth Choir
Choirs – St Simon’s school children’s choir
Live Nativity Play

The Night Includes:

In Parish Church
Time: 7–8:30pm
Sunday 18th December

ST SIMON'S COMMUNITY CELEBRATION:

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL

2016
CHRISTMAS CAROL
St Simon the Apostle Parish
2 Taylors Lane, Rowville 3178
☎️ (03) 9764 4058  📧 (03) 9764 5154
✉️ office@stsimonsparish.com.au  🌐 www.stsimonsparish.com.au

PARISHES - THE HEARTBEAT OF THE CHURCH

Christmas Services
Communal Reconciliation Service - 2nd Rite Wednesday 14th December @ 7.30pm.

Christmas Carols including a live Nativity play
Sunday 18th December @ 7.00pm in the Church.
If your child is interested in taking part in the Nativity play, please RSVP on 9764 4058 or send an email to office@stsimonsparish.com.au. Practice will be held on Wednesday 7th & 14th at 3.30pm in the church. A light snack will be provided prior to starting.

Christmas Mass Times
Saturday 24th December @ 6.00pm, 9.30pm,
Carols 11.30pm followed by Midnight Mass,
Sunday 25th December @ 10.00am,
Monday Boxing Day - No Mass.

PARISH RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS
1st $2000 Hello World Travel Voucher - Andrew Richardson
2nd $1000 Petrol Voucher - Joice Philip
3rd Olinda B & B Getaway - Stella Ryan
4th Puffing Billy Dinner & Dance - Lynn Emons
5th $200 Toyworld Voucher - A Mc Allister
6th Puffing Billy Family Pass - Bathan family