Dear Families,

A very warm welcome to the 2017 school year at St Francis of Assisi. I hope you all had a happy Christmas and a great break with family before a busy school year begins. Thank you for the lovely welcome I have received this week in my new role. I am proud to have the position of Principal at St Francis of Assisi and look forward to working with your children throughout the year.

We welcomed 30 new students from Years 1-6 on Monday and 70 new Kinder students on Tuesday. A very special welcome to all. Welcome to those parents who are joining our community for the first time and I hope your time with us is rewarding for both children and adults. If you are a returning St Francis of Assisi Primary School family please help the new members of our community feel welcome.

A special welcome to new staff who are joining us this year: Mr Wayne Young (Kindergarten Fire), Mr Matt Smith (Year One Fire), Mrs Lauren Macdonald (Year One Water and Literacy Coordinator), Miss Madeline Holgate (Year One Earth), Miss Nikki Arcidiacono (Year 2 Water), Miss Sarah Ciuffetelli (Year 3 Fire), Miss Rachel Southwell (Year 4 Water), Miss Rachel Mian (Year 5 Fire), Mrs Helen Crow (Classroom Teacher Assistant), Mrs Kylie Hynes (Classroom Teacher Assistant) and Mrs Tiffany Reedy (Assistant Principal).

As you can see we have had a significant turn over in staff and I am excited by the contributions our new staff members will have within our school community.

FIRST WEEK OF TERM
It was wonderful seeing so many bright and cheerful faces on Monday morning. The children looked excited as they went in to their new classes, and as I visited the students throughout the day it was evident that they were very happy and settled with their new teachers.

Tuesday marked the first day of Kindergarten and once again the children entered their classroom with enthusiasm. With hardly any tears, (from the parents) the children happily farewelled their families and had a wonderful first day.

Together as peacemakers, we grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus

This is the vision statement of our school and as we begin a new year, let us do so with a sense of freshness, enjoyment and community. May the spirit of Jesus be with us this year.

PARENT INFORMATION EVENING- THIS MONDAY
You are strongly encouraged to attend the Parent Information Night next Monday at 6:00pm. The evening will commence in the Hall with a brief introduction of staff followed by information regarding the 2017 school year at St Francis. There will then be an opportunity to have a sausage sizzle to meet your class teacher and receive an information pack that will include important aspects of the curriculum taught through the year. Please bring your children- it is a family event and all students will be supervised from 6-6:30pm on the oval from staff from BASCA.

Please make this time a priority as it is important that all families hear the information presented. (There will be lucky door prizes too!)

A note was sent yesterday via email asking for numbers for catering. Could you respond to this by tomorrow please.

Together we are peacemakers who grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus
OPENING SCHOOL MASS
Our Opening School Mass will be held on Wednesday 15th February. After this Mass, our Year Six students will be inducted as our student leaders. This is always a special Mass and again, I encourage you to join us if you can. Morning Tea will follow.

SCHOOL UNIFORM
Thank you to everyone for such a great start to the year. The children have arrived at school looking exceptional in their school uniform. Being part of St Francis of Assisi Primary School means adhering to correct uniform. It is essential that your child has a school hat. Play on the playground is only allowed if a hat is worn. Jewellery is not part of the uniform and, apart from watches and ear studs, should not be worn. Long hair must be tied back and be of the child’s natural colour. Does your child have black shoes and a St Francis of Assisi school bag? Thank you for your cooperation with this.

SCHOOL BANKING
We are seeking assistance from someone within our school community to help process the children’s school banking. We already have a team of two people who reconcile each child’s banking and enter the details into the computer. The money is then counted and taken to the bank.

If you are interested in this position, we would love to hear from you. It would mean a commitment of approximately 2 hours, every 3rd Wednesday. Training will be made available.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PICK UP AND DROP OFF
A note went home on Monday explaining the procedures for drop off and pick up. I do ask that you are patient during these times, as rushing or overtaking cars in our drop off zones can be dangerous to our children. Dropping off a little earlier in the morning or collecting a little later in the afternoon can alleviate some of our traffic congestion. Getting all children to and from school safely is of paramount importance. Supervision for students begins at 8:30am and finishes at 3:30pm.

Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook! We find it is a great way to disseminate information.

Thank you too for your efforts in preparing your child/ren so well. It has been a very smooth start to the year.

Kate Markcrow
Principal (Acting)

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Welcome back to 2017! Week 1 is already well and truly kicking along. I wanted to take some time to let you know about my roles at school this year. I am continuing as Parent Liaison Officer working on Fridays. I have also been fortunate to be able to come in an additional 2 days per week as the School Chaplain. These days will be usually Tuesdays and Thursdays.

So what does a School Chaplain do? My role is to provide help and care to support the personal and social well-being of students and the whole school community. I am here for everyone, to provide pastoral care services, guidance in relation to spiritual and/or ethical situations, providing support and referrals (if required) to students, families and staff and facilitating access to external support agencies. Please be assured that I will maintain a high level of confidentiality with anything that is discussed.

I would love to get to know more of our fantastic parent community at St Francis. I am always available for a cuppa and chat and value new ideas and suggestions that the wider school community may have. It would be really great, if in this crazy busy world that we live in, we can continue to strengthen and develop relationships within the school community. We have quite a number of new enrolments this year, which mean new parents. I think we can all relate to that feeling when you come to a new school. I am looking at ways that we can make this transition easier for people coming into our school. So watch this space and if you are keen to get involved please let me know.

So back to this term, we have a very busy event-packed 10 weeks. Next Monday we have the Parent Information Night. I would encourage all families to attend, it is a great opportunity to meet people and have the most up-to-date information with you for the coming school year. Please get your RSVP slips back by Friday so I can ensure I have ordered enough sausages.

We also have the swimming carnival, cross-country carnival, grandparent’s day, school photos and the end of term Walkathon! I will be on the hunt for parent volunteers over the coming weeks.

We are also looking for a Parent Service Committee Convener and Working Bee Coordinator. If this sounds like you, or you would be interested in further information, please let me know.

I am looking forward to the coming term. As mentioned above, I am available at the school on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and also on email: romney.kelly@catholic.edu.au
Our 2017 focus symbol
Our 2017 focus symbol this year is our new Vision statement. To journey with Jesus reminds us that we choose to follow Jesus so all we do and say reflects that. It means to be a peacemaker as Francis of Assisi chose to be, in accepting and welcoming others without judgement. It means in our community we support each other, as we are all companions with Jesus, always learning and growing. It means we show the love and compassion which Jesus had in his heart to all we meet.

Sacrament Enrolment
Notes will be sent home soon to explain how to enrol your child for Confirmation (June), Eucharist (August) or Reconciliation (November). An information evening is available if you need assistance or have questions, February 15th and 16th between 5:30pm - 6:30pm at Holy Family Church, Gowrie.

The Gospel according to 6 Water
Today Year 6 Water joined the weekly Wednesday Mass with our new priest, Father Jiss. (Sarah)
The Gospel today was about the priests in the synagogue wondering why the son of a carpenter was so knowledgeable. (Elliott)
He told us to clap our hands to represent bread and to make a tight fist to represent coffee. He then said "bread, coffee, bread, coffee" really fast. We had to keep changing until we were focused. (Toby)
After the game had finished he said we need to focus on God. We had a photo outside the church with Father Jiss. We then enjoyed biscuits that Audrey baked at the parish. (Keira)

6 Earth are at Mass next Wednesday morning. Parents are also welcome.

Mini Vinnies - Lulu Mitshabu visit
On Tuesday we were thrilled to have Lulu Mitshabu who works from Caritas for our first Mini Vinnies meeting this year. She shared her own harrowing experiences as a refugee escaping political oppression in what is now known as The Democratic Republic of the Congo. We learned about her work with the not for profit Catholic agency Caritas. Here are some reflections from the more than 40 students who will form Mini Vinnies this year:
Lulu told us the story of her life.
Lulu was in Africa where all the girls had to stay home and all the boys went to school and work. She could go to school because her dad wanted her to and he had enough money.
Most of her friends had to leave school to get married and stay at home.
Lulu got arrested when she was 12 years old for wearing jeans.
She had to get married early at 18 so her husband could support her.

Her neighbour said, “Your husband has been arrested”, so she ran for her life, pregnant and with two little girls. She sold the clothes and shoes they were wearing just to survive.
Her husband was beaten and tortured, but survived his injuries. He finally came to the refugee camp.
In Zambia, they were told to leave the refugee camp in two days or be sent back. She met an Australian lady at church who was touched by her story and said she could help them. Now she is an Australian and is so much happier! We were so touched by Lulu’s story. We want to belong to Mini Vinnies and help people like Lulu.

Opening School Mass save the date
You are all warmly invited to our Opening School Mass in week 3, Wednesday February 15 at 9:30am in the hall.
CANTEEN NEWS

We would like to welcome everyone back after the holidays and hope everyone had a nice break. If your child/children have any food allergies or special dietary requirements please come and see us.

The Canteen is closed for business on TUESDAYS again this year. I would encourage all parents/carers (grandparents welcome too!) to consider volunteering to help in the canteen…there are many options, depending on your time constraints and our Canteen Manager, Mrs Sue Lever & Jo Summerfield is very appreciative of any offers. Even if you could spare 15 minutes first up in the morning that would be a help. A slip that can be returned to the school will come home soon.

All lunch orders must be submitted online by 9am. Have you signed up for FLEXISCHOOLS?

Dear Families

Welcome back for 2017!

Term 1 fee statements will be issued via email in Week 2. It is important that I have all the correct information in our database to ensure you are billed correctly. If you have children at St Francis of Assisi as well as at a systemic high school (e.g. Merici College, St Clare’s College, St Mary Mackillop College), please let me know as soon as possible (if you haven’t already) to ensure you receive the 20% tuition fee discount and you are not inadvertently charged the Building Fund.

If you have a Direct Debit in place, please get in touch with me to check and/or update your instalments for the year. I can be contacted in the office on 6292 4500 or via email susan.rowell@cg.catholic.edu.au. I work Monday to Thursday each week.

Kind regards
Susan Rowell

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**FINANCE NEWS**

**The Dollarsmites are bringing the future to your school.**

Since 1931, CommBank’s School Banking program has been offering engaging bank for Australian children to learn the value of saving and develop lifelong money skills.

For our 2017 theme, a futuristic adventure is in store. Students will join the new look Dollarsmites as Future Savers, making their way towards the Savings Hover Park—a fantastic playground up in the clouds of a hi-tech metropolis.

**Encouraging savings habits with great rewards**

School Banking will continue to reward children who demonstrate regular savings behaviour, and this year we’re introducing an exciting new range of reward items. Two are released every term, and available in Term 1 are the Cyber Handball and Colour Change Markers. Your child can redeem one of these reward items, while stocks last, after making 10 School Banking deposits.

Visit [commbank.com.au/schoolbanking](http://commbank.com.au/schoolbanking) to download and print this year’s Rewards Card. On our website you’ll also find a fun activity sheet and a Savings Tracker your child can use to keep track of their School Banking deposits throughout the year.

**Dedicated savers get a chance to win a trip to Tokyo Disneyland**

The Future Savers Grand Prize competition will take one lucky student on a family trip to Tokyo, Japan. Up to two adults and three children will get tickets to explore Tokyo Disneyland and Tokyo DisneySea, including the futuristic Tomorrowland attractions. This prize includes:

- Return economy airfares from the winner’s nearest capital city to Tokyo, Japan
- Five nights’ accommodation at the Sheraton Grande Tokyo Bay Hotel
- Three-day Magic Pass to Tokyo Disneyland and Tokyo DisneySea
- AU$1,000 spending money

To enter, your child simply has to make 15 or more School Banking deposits before the end of Term 3, 2017. This will automatically enter them into the competition for a chance to win.


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**CLOTHING POOL OPENING HOURS**

**Monday**  
8.30am - 9.00am

**Thursday**  
3.15pm - 3.45pm
The Society of St Vincent de Paul  
Calwell and Gowrie Conferences

2017 DOORKNOCK APPEAL  
1 February – 28 February

We’d like to ask for your assistance in the upcoming annual St Vincent de Paul DoorKnock, taking place during February. We appreciate all the help and generosity that has been offered in the past, and hope you can assist with this year’s door knock appeal to help raise funds for the St Vincent de Paul Society.

We still have many people in our area who are much less fortunate than ourselves – and our annual DOORKNOCK Appeal is the main fundraiser to provide assistance to the needy in our local area.

Here are some figures to show the amount of work SDVP volunteers carried out just in the Corpus Christi parish area alone during 2016:

- Approximately 90 local families receive food and financial support per month
- Over 100 food and present hampers were provided for Christmas in 2016
- Calwell and Gowrie conferences last year provided about $45,000 in assistance

Here are some figures on the DoorKnock requirements:

- There are around 350 collection areas between both Conferences each with up to 50 houses
- Last year between the Calwell and Gowrie Conferences over $45,000 was raised

We ask you to please assist with 1 – 2 hours of time as a volunteer door knocker
You can collect on any day or evening between 1st February and 28th February 2017

A huge thanks to the people who have collected year after year – and some volunteers are doing 5 or more areas because we don’t have enough volunteers!

Please fill out the form below, on the page on the table outside the Church if you can help out!!
Or you can phone Sam on 0414 745 942 or 6291 4692, Kathryn on 0409 047 509 (Calwell Parish) or Paul on 0488 284 139 (Gowrie Parish).

Thank you for your continued support!!

Yes, I can help with the 2017 St Vincent de Paul DoorKnock Appeal

Surname: ........................................ Other Names: .................................
Address: .................................................................................................
...................................................................................................................

Phone No: ....................
Prefered suburb to collect in: .......................... Number of areas:.............

Please complete and place in box in foyer. Thank you for your assistance.

Please note: If you have already been contacted by a Society member, you do not need to complete this form.