

# NEWSLETTER

WEEK 8 - TERM 4

## ST RITA'S SCHOOL SOUTH JOHNSTONE



26<sup>th</sup> November, 2013

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Thank you to everyone who supported Book Fair last week. The children were very excited by the event. Congratulations to Megan Calleja and Luke Magnanini who guessed how many grubs were in the container. We now have an additional 60 books in the school library as a result of commissions.

A note from Mrs Kenny, explaining details of next Wednesday's Christmas concert, is also going home today. Please take the time to read it, as certain classes need particular shirts. Don't forget the supper afterwards. Everyone is asked to bring along a plate of food to share. The children have been practicing for their item intently during the term. Remember that everyone is very welcome to attend. It is a great opportunity to come together as a school community.

Tonight we celebrate the time we have shared with 15 wonderful children during their educational journey at St. Rita's. Regardless of how long they have been with us, theirs and their families' story will always be part of St. Rita's history. We wish them all the best for the future, irrespective of the direction their lives will take.

Next week I will be able to inform you who were the recipients of the awards given on this night.

I will be out of the school from this Thursday to next Tuesday attending my own family graduation. My daughter Meagan, graduates from the Whitehouse Institute of Design in Sydney. As a past student of St. Rita's I am extremely proud of her and her efforts.

Thank you to the parents of Year 4 students who have taken the time to come and see me regarding arrangements for 2014. Your co-operation certainly makes the process easier.

Just a reminder, school finishes at 12.00 p.m. next Friday. There will be **NO homework club next Wednesday or next Friday**. Please make alternative arrangements for these particular days.

Last Friday was our annual "Parents versus Year Sevens" softball match. The parents had to quickly learn the intricate rules of softball. The competitiveness was evident when parents and children pitched to one another. All involved, with the parents being the victors, had a fun time.

It is extremely important if you have not as yet completed the **parent information sheet** that has come home with previous newsletters to do so **before the end of the year**. This sheet forms the basis of our contact with you in the event of something happening to your child. It is imperative that this information is up-to-date at all times. The information is also needed as next year all the schools are going to a new system of information storage. Thank you to those families who have already returned your form

Once again I also ask you to settle accounts that have not been settled. **There are quite a few instrumental music accounts that are quite large**. Not only do you jeopardize your place in the program next year, but also your future enrolment with Good Counsel College as they supply this service to us.

Year 2 parents, please take the time to drop by the classroom and have a look at the amazing toys the children have created. There are definitely some very imaginative, creative children in that class. I also know that they have also had lots of fun along the way. Thank you to Miss Yarrow for guiding the children through this unit of work.

With only just over a week of the 2013 school year left, (where has the year gone), thank you for your continued support. Have a great week.

God bless.  
Vicki

## **ASSEMBLY THIS WEEK**

**(To present St Vinnie's Hamper.)**

## **TUCKSHOP THIS FRIDAY is the End of Year Sell Off Day**

There is no set menu. Children are to just bring along money if they wish to purchase items. Helpers are needed on the day.

Any donations for Morning Tea items will be welcomed.

## ***Christmas Eve Vigil Mass 6.30pm***

Calling for all parts: Joseph, Mary, shepherds, angels, animals! Come and be part of the real meaning of Christmas. Practice for the Children's Gospel will be Friday 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December commencing at 3.30pm in Mother of Good Counsel Church, Innisfail. Contact - Maria on 40632210/0448 716 271, or Angie Sheerans ' 0409 871 636

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS Keeping the Gospel Alive...**



This weekend we celebrated the feast of Christ of King which marks the end of the Ordinary time of the liturgical year and the beginning of Advent. Next week as we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. Jesus can only come to us if we are willing to open our hearts and minds wide to receive him. We can do this by reaching out in love and forgiveness as Jesus did even when He was on the cross.

*'Prepare Ye the way of the Lord'.*



### **St Vinnie's Christmas Appeal**

This is our last week to collect food items for the Christmas hamper. We have a reputation for being very generous so I am looking forward to having plenty of food to sort into boxes for the St Vincent De Paul reps when they come to our assembly on Friday for the presentation. So don't forget to send something along to your class asap.

### **How many baskets/boxes can we fill??**

Assembly on Friday is for St Vinnies and Naidoc Awareness. It will be followed by a day of Naidoc activities to develop cultural understanding.

Yours in the risen Christ  
Angela Cristaudo  
APRE



## A DONKEY DREAMS

I remember the night, O so long ago,  
When a star shone bright in the sky  
And three wise men, on their camels astride  
They followed its path from on high.  
They rode through the dunes, 'till at last they came  
Where the star danced high 'ore a town  
With heads bowed in prayer and joy in their hearts  
To the child, their gifts they lay down.  
This child called Jesus, in a manger He lay  
As He looked up and smiled at them.  
I remember the night, O so long ago  
When we rode into Bethlehem.

*Santina Lizzio – 2013 ©*

### **Sacramental Program 2014**

Enrolments forms are now available for the Sacramental Program for 2014. If you have a child who has been baptised Catholic and will be in year 4 in 2014 (or an older grade) then please contact Angie at the Parish Office on 40616633 or drop in to collect your enrolment form. The Sacramental Program includes the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of Confirmation and the Sacrament of Eucharist. Early in the new year, once enrolments have been finalised, a brochure will be posted to you outlining what the Sacraments are about and important dates to take note of.

Lisa DeBuck - Sacramental Coordinator.

## **BILLY SLATER CUP AND KANGA CRICKET.**

If you have not yet paid for Billy Slater Cup (Yr 6/7) - \$5 or Kanga Cricket (Yr4-7) - \$7, please do so as soon as possible.

## **NEW HAIR TIES & HEAD BANDS.**

We have received a new selection of head dress in school colours to choose from. These are displayed on the notice board in the office. The items are coded **1 to 7** for ordering purposes. If you wish to order please **print** your name and the **number** you require, on the relevant page.

## **SCHOOL FEES**

**Outstanding Fees  
need to be paid as a  
matter of urgency!**



Thank you to those families who have paid their outstanding fees. However, several families still have amounts outstanding (either school fees, instrumental music fees and/or activity fees). Every effort must be given to paying the balance of these fees **PRIOR TO THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**. There are only two weeks left to pay your account. If you are having difficulty, please contact Jenni or Vicki. Thank you to those who may have already spoken to us.

### **DIRECT DEBITING SCHOOL PAYMENTS**

Please indicate in your description whether the amount is for fees or other. Amounts without a description will automatically go against school fees.

Account Name: RCTC for the Diocese of Cairns - St Rita's School, South Johnstone

Account No: 00000 5018 BSB: 084352

**FREE Well Women's Clinics**

**Mamu Health Service**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December—**

**Ph: 4061 4477**

**Innisfail Hospital**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

**Ph: 4226 4812 or 0428 781 421**

Service includes Pap Smears, Sexual Health Screening, Breast Awareness, also info on Contraception, Continence, Menopause, Lifestyle Issues, Domestic Violence, etc. All services are provided by a specially trained Women's Health Nurse.

**DENTAL VAN**

The Innisfail school dental Van will be operating over the Christmas school holidays. Anyone who has not had a dental check in the past twelve months, has a teen dental voucher or is experiencing dental problems can ring 40 160 518 for an appointment.



*Mrs Conomo with Paul DallaVecchia, proud representative of the winners of the Parent/Yr 7 Softball Match held last Friday.*

***"Better luck next time kids!"***



**MUNRO THEATRE**

**BABINDA**

29 & 30 Nov, & 1 Dec

Commencing 7.30pm

Admission \$8

**"GROWN UPS 2" Rated: M**

**Calendar of Events Term 4**

<b>WEEK 8</b>	
26 Nov	Yr 7 Graduation Dinner - Wangan Hall - 6.30pm
27 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yr 4 &amp; 5 Reconciliation</li> <li>➤ Yr 6/7 League Tag Day - Callendar Park</li> </ul>

<b>WEEK 9</b>	
<b>4 Dec</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS CONCERT</b>
6 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ End of Year Mass 10.30am</li> <li>➤ End of School Year 12.00pm</li> </ul>

**2014 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Term 1	Tues 28 Jan - Fri 4 April	10 weeks
Term 2	Tues 22 April - Fri 27 June	10 weeks
Term 3	Mon 14 July - Fri 19 Sept	10 weeks
Term 4	Tues 7 Oct - Fri 5 Dec	9 weeks

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME (Lauren DallaVecchia)

The shrill of the alarm woke me -7am. My head started to pound. Another restless night without sleep.

"Carly," I heard mum calling.

She wanted me downstairs. Hoping I wasn't in trouble, I waddled down stairs. When I walked into the kitchen Mum had prepared a nice breakfast of fresh ham and cheese croissants and fresh strawberries. I sat down to eat. After I had eaten Mum passed me a plane ticket. Instantly I knew what this meant. I was going to Paris. Finally, Mum had changed her mind. In six days I would be in France. She was going to let me be an exchange student. A part of me felt guilty as mum was a single parent and I was her only child.

The next few days were frantic with packing and saying good-bye to friends. After all I would be gone for a year. Finally the arrived and we were off. I hugged and kissed mum goodbye this would be our last time together for a while . I could here my name for boarding. I found my seat and sat down. The pilot announced the plane was about to take off. The plane started to move. Within a short time we were flying. There was that feeling of guilt again. All I could think about was my mum that feeling subsided after I took in the view. When the food cart came around. I ordered a delicious mini cheese tray. My taste buds were dancing. If this is what they eat in Paris I could get used to it.

After an eighteen-hour flight we reached Paris. When I got to Arrival lounge my new family was waiting for me. Standing there was a boy, Francesco, two girls, Alexandra and Valentina, their mum Sophia and their dad Alfonso.

This family seemed nice. They had a certain air about them. They took me to their home on the outskirts of the city. For dinner we had fire roasted tomato-basil crab bisque, at least that's what Sophia told me. After dinner Francesco said he would for a tour of the Eiffel tower tomorrow. I was so excited. My first time to the Eiffel tower.

Finally the day dawned. I was dressed and ready to. We were going to get there on Francesco bike. We reached the Eiffel tower and the tour started the tour. The view from the tower was stunning. At every level the view was more extravagant. It cost 27.10 euro for the three levels so we only went to the second level. Once the tour had ended we ate at a restaurant on ground level. For the first time in my life I tried snails. I was pleasantly surprised at how nice they tasted. I looked up at the sky to see if there was a storm approaching. I noticed that the Eiffel tower was of balance. I thought I was just dreaming. How could this be?

Suddenly my thoughts became a reality. Before my eyes the tower came hurdling down. I shouted to Francesco, "Run."

I managed to escape. Then I saw Francesco lying under the rubble. I thought he was dead. I ran up to him through all the dust and held his hand and cried. All of a sudden his hand clenched mine. I was screaming for help. Then Francesco opened his eyes.

"Carly," he said

I replied, "Yes."

"Why are you crying," he said laughing a little. I laughed back. I helped him up and we walked over to the ambulance.

Francesco had sustained a crushed rib, a broken arm and a severe cut to his face. Other than that he was fine. When Sophia, Alfonzo, Alexandra and Valentina showed up to the hospital they kept asking me questions I couldn't answer. At exactly the same time Alexandra and Valentina said, "Is Francesco alright."

Alfonzo replied, "I'm sure he's fine girls."

The doctor came out at just the right time and said, "you're right Alfonzo he'll be fine but he will have to come back for regular observation."

We all went home and prayed that everyone in Paris would be all right. The news reporters are calling it the 'great collapse of 2013'. The next day I returned home because the collapse of the tower frightened me. I needed my mum. What was supposed to be the best trip of my life was one of the worst, but my host family was so kind and nice that I would definitely come back some day in the future and continue my holiday.

## **THE TORNADO DISASTER (Ethan Darveniza)**

It was early Sunday morning when James and his family were leaving for a trip of a lifetime. They were planning to explore the Pacific Ocean. They were going to visit Fiji and many Pacific islands.

"The boat's ready," said dad.

"Great! Can we jump on board?" shouted the kids.

Friends had gathered to bid them farewell. Finally after exchanging hugs and kisses they set sail. James soon settled into the routine. Life was good on the boat. It was Dad's pride and joy. It had a kitchen, lounge room with TV and a gaming console. The vessel also had five luxurious beds. During the day James swam and snorkelled with the fascinating sea life. In week ten of the trip James's dad was aiming to pass through one of the most dangerous channels of the Pacific. The reef was shallow.

Just as they reached the north of the Pacific, dad yelled out, "Buckle up! It's going to be a rough night!"

As he went below deck James felt excited. Tomorrow he would get to use his spear gun for the first time. He kissed his mum and went to bed.

"Wake up!" yelled dad. "There's a tornado ahead. We need to evacuate the vessel."

James quickly ran to the lifeboat, while mum frantically gathered some food. Dad yelled at everyone to get into the lifeboat, "There should be life jackets under the life boat's deck," he said.

James had never seen his dad so scared. The tornado was getting closer. Waves were breaking over the boat from all directions. Water was smashing the front deck of the boat. Suddenly the boat was ripped off. Dad knew he had to evacuate now..... but it was too late.

The boat capsized, James's family disappeared. He yelled out, "Mum, dad, are you there?"

There was no response. Because of James's quick thinking he grabbed a life jacket and some rope from the lifeboat. He tied the rope to the life jacket. James quickly dove beneath the water risking his life for his family. He knew he had to be quick. James swam inside the boat where he found his mum and dad caught under a cupboard. He grabbed them and swam to the surface. He swam to the lifeboat. His parents gasped for air. Dad knew that they had to get away or the tornado would crush the lifeboat into a million pieces. They quickly drifted away.

The next day the wild weather calmed down. James and his family were starving. They knew they would have to find help soon. James was starting to lose hope. It was reaching the end of the day. James and his family had to conserve their food because if they were stranded on the ocean for some time they would run out of supplies. James wished he never went on this trip. They had been floating for two days without seeing another ship.

By the third day James and his family were really low on food. They could only eat one tin of beans, which they shared every second day. Dad would scan the sea with his binoculars hoping for land or a ship. Dad was about to give up when he saw something in the distance.

“A ship. We’re saved!” screeched dad.

James and mum jumped for joy. Suddenly dad shot a flare into the air. Soon after they were picked up and taken to the nearest port. James was a hero, and he always told the story of his rescue, with pride.

## **THE STORM (Rebecca Piccolo)**

It was a warm summer’s day. The wind gently brushed against Samantha’s face blowing her dark brown hair. Coco, her small brown and white dog ran around chasing the birds. Suddenly that all changed as a dark cloud rolled over the town. The thunder rumbled and the lightning flashed. Rain began pouring down in torrents. Samantha who was enjoying her picnic, suddenly realised there was a storm coming. She quickly packed up her gear and placed it in her bike basket.

“Coco where are you,” Samantha yelled.

In the distance she heard a small whimper. She quickly spun round and ran to the river.

“Coco I’m coming,” she reassured her dog.

Samantha looked at the river in horror. The water was rising and rapidly flowing. The banks were littered with debris. The once calm sparkling water was now a boiling caldron. Samantha’s clothes were drenched. She looked at the river. Suddenly she caught sight of a small brown figure gripping on to a partly submerged, rotten log. Without thinking Samantha jumped into the river.

Her mouth filled with water. She started to splutter, “Coco, Coco, where are you?”

She heard a soft bark and a whimper. Samantha started to swim towards her dog. Coco barked louder. The log was falling apart. In horror, Samantha saw that Coco was losing her grip. With one last bark Coco fell into the water. Samantha swam frantically, trying to reach her dog.

Samantha grabbed Coco. She pulled herself up on to another log floating past. Samantha was now shivering with fear and cold. Happy to be in Samantha’s arms, Coco gently nudged Samantha. Suddenly, with a thud the log hit the shore. Coco started to pull Samantha back to the shore. Coco shivered, and snuggled into Samantha’s damp clothes.

The next morning found the sun shining brightly. “Coco, you must be hungry because I sure am,” Samantha said. Barking with joy Coco ran to Samantha. “Good girl, you saved my life”, Samantha gently ruffled Coco’s silky brown hair.

Suddenly she heard a loud beating sound. Samantha looked through the trees. Through the bright sunlight she saw a rescue helicopter. The people in the rescue helicopter were dropping a rope ladder.

“Are you ok?” yelled a man. “Yes,” Samantha replied. Samantha climbed the rope ladder with Coco in her left arm. She looked into Coco’s eyes and said, “It’s going to be good to get home.”

# A DAY I'LL NEVER FORGET (Jade Schroeter)

It was eight o'clock. I had eaten my breakfast and was strolling down Devadon Beach. I was looking for new shells to add to my collection. I had decided to take a quick dip in the beautiful, pristine ocean. Little did I know what the day had in store for me.

"Jesse, quick, get into the car!" my mother screeched.

I ran for my life, not quite sure why. As I jumped into the car I asked what was happening. Mum just let me sit in silence. I decided to turn on the radio to pass the time. Suddenly a warning message came on the air. I listened in horror.

*"An 8.9 magnitude earthquake has occurred 20km off the coast. People living off the coast of Welshmount have one hour to evacuate to the hills. A forty-metre tsunami is expected to impact the coast of Devadon Beach."*

I burst into tears and looked at my mum. She was crying too. We started speeding towards the hills, as fast as the car would go. My mother, still in a trance, not moving, not talking, just drove madly along the freeway. She didn't take any notice of stop signs or other cars.

"Speak to me mum! Speak to me!" I pleaded. I must have broken that trance because she began to tremble uncontrollably.

The car suddenly began to chug and splutter. I looked at the fuel gauge – **EMPTY!** We both began to cry hysterically. All we could do was run.

My mum started yelling, "Get out! Start running! I'll catch up."

"Fine! Make sure you do!" I yelled as I got out of the car. I started sprinting as far away from Welshmount as I could. I wasn't taking notice of anything around me. I just had to get out of there. I ran for about thirty minutes. I looked back to see how far I had run. As I turned around I gasped in horror. Half the town was scooped up by a monster tidal wave. I fell to my knees. It was time to find my mum.

I hurried back towards where my mum had parked the car. As I looked around I saw the damage the trauma had caused; children crying, homes wiped off the face of this Earth. It was getting dark so I decided to make camp behind a billboard.

I woke early. I had to find mum quickly. The car was nowhere to be seen, neither was my mum. I burst into tears. I decided to firstly check my home and see where that would take me.

As I walked along the street I was horrified to see how much damage this terrible catastrophe had caused. I found my house. It was barely standing upright. The doors, windows and roof had disappeared. I started yelling for mum.

"Mum! Mum! Mum!" I chanted, but there was no response. I searched each room, but she was nowhere to be seen. I started running to the beach, hoping to find her. I saw someone kneeling down on the beach. It was a lady. As I went towards her I saw washed up jellyfish, octopui and other sea animals. I noticed the lady was helping a young beached whale. I watched for a few minutes. I then asked, "Who are you?"



She looked up at me and replied, "I'm your mother."

I jumped up and down yelling, "Mum, how did you survive?" I was so excited to see her.

"When I told you to run, I realised what was really happening, I ran inland to find shelter. Luckily I made it out before the wave hit."

"I'm just so happy you're alive," I said with tears in my eyes. I gave mum a hug and helped her with the whale, we headed to a hotel, which thankfully survived the tsunami.

When I arrived at the hotel I asked, "Mum, how did you know the tsunami was coming?"

"I saw the waves being enveloped by the ocean. I knew a tsunami was going to hit soon," she explained.

I gave my mum a hug of relief. After that fateful week, we bought a new home off the coast, high in the hills and far away from the sea.

## A Heroic Attempt (Tashana Morales)

There I stood, helplessly, watching my father being taken away. Just looking at the men wearing the uniform that represented cruelty and death made me crumble inside. I could see the blood dripping from the fresh barb wired cut on my father's face. Of course it didn't help living in Czechoslovakia during one of the country's coldest winters. In spite of the old clothes that I wore, I knew that the tight feeling overtaking my body wasn't caused by the cold air but by the fear of what might happen to my father. The Nazi's occupation of Czechoslovakia was going to change our lives forever.

It was early Thursday morning when I quietly walked to my mother's room. I didn't want to wake her. Her bed was empty. It looked like it hadn't been slept in. Had she been taken while I slept? I looked for mother, down the dark, deserted street. Who was going to be taken next? My heart started to tighten again. Were the Nazi's on the hunt for my family? My brother and I were definitely in danger.

Fearing what would happen to us, I grabbed my brother and frantically ran to the neighbour's house. We called out to them but no one answered. Had they been taken as well? We searched the house. As we were about to leave I heard heavy footsteps, I grabbed Vaclav and hid under the bed in the nearest bedroom. Hearing the footsteps made us panic. Who had seen us and had they followed us?

I looked at Vaclav, pointed to the window and whispered, "Vaclav, climb through."

He started to climb through the window when someone grabbed him. I covered my mouth for fear I'd scream. Was this the last time I was going to see my brother? I had to find him before they took me.

After they left I waited under the bed for a while. Then I crept out and grabbed all the food and water that I could carry. I looked for the warmest clothes I could find. I headed to the next safest place in the neighbourhood.

My friend, Jitka, always told me about her basement. I never knew why she talked about it so much. It was cold, muddy and it made me feel scared. I felt someone was watching me from the roof above. After an hours walk, my legs started to ache and I almost collapsed. Suddenly, I saw the house with the blue shutters and I felt relief. I climbed through the window and down to the basement. Suddenly, I saw something move. It was Jitka. She was hiding under a blanket. She raced to me in tears and gave me a hug. Her parents had been taken and she didn't know what to do. I told her that my whole family had been taken and I wanted her to help me.

It was a cold Friday morning when Jitka told me that we had to start leaving before the soldiers came again. We then packed our gear and headed north to Ludice. I could see Jitka shivering so I gave her my dad's coat from my bag. We tried to keep each other warm. What was I going to do tomorrow and how was I going to save our families? Was it too late?

It was Saturday. We ate some left over food from the night before. It wasn't much but it would keep us going. We walked for several hours until we came to the camp where my family would have been taken. As I expected,

the camp was surrounded with soldiers. I realised I had to sacrifice myself. I had to be arrested. I ran to the barbed wire. I pretended to climb under the gate. Suddenly, someone grabbed me by the shirt. My heart tightened once again.

I spun around. With relief I saw Frank, a family friend. He told me that he had been watching the soldiers arresting our families. My heart jumped with glee when Frank told me that the three of us would free our families. I imagined the thrill of three young teenagers outwitting the German army.

Luckily, the moon hid behind a dark cloud to make our escape easier. Frank, Jitka and I went to the far end of the compound. The secret entrance was partially hidden by bush. We dug a hole to unlock the secret entrance. An hour later we started to climb through the hole under the fence. Then I looked up and saw a guard dog standing beside a soldier, who was holding a machine gun. I looked back at Jitka and Frank. My heart sank. I now feared that we would be joining our families to face an uncertain end.