From the Principal

Dear Parents

This morning our school Captains, Ellie Hoogervorst and Joshua Cavallo, and Vice-Captains, Amy Hassarati and Christopher Kharoufeh, were interviewed by the Hills Times.

I sat there feeling very proud of these young people. They were very articulate and spoke very proudly of our school. They each had their own views on the questions asked and were confident giving their responses. This interview session brought to mind the importance of our children knowing how important it is for them to always be true to themselves, to be honest to themselves when making decisions and not follow the wrong path because of peer pressure.

Peer pressure can start when we are two years old and continue well into our twilight years, but it does seem to have its most intense influence during the adolescent years. This is the time when our children are striking out on their own and trying to identify who they really are. Childhood guidance and rules no longer suit their needs. They might try to give the impression they can now stand on their own two feet, but those legs above their feet are rather shaky and they need us to be there for them as never before.

Facing peer pressure is a natural part of growing up and whether or not our children give in to its negative aspects, will have a lot to do with the kind of relationship they share with us, their parents. Establishing a good relationship will take time and so needs to be commenced when our children are infants. The pillar of our relationship should be the continued message to our children that they are always loved and accepted for who they are, no matter what.

The forging of a bond with our children that will make them feel loved and accepted for who they are, will give them a sense of security. This security will give them the strength to stand up for their values and beliefs. Our children’s beliefs about certain things may be different from ours, because the world has moved on since we were young. We need to allow them their beliefs and respect them even if they appear to be not well informed. We can encourage them to stand up for what they believe in and so let them know that their opinions matter. We might not always be in agreement but we can provide them with the opportunity to share their opinions, and so let our children know they have an unconditional support system.

From an early age, we should encourage our children to make their own decisions. We can guide them towards the right thing to do when dealing with a friend who is teasing, or what stance to take in a disagreement amongst peers, but the final decision should be theirs; accepting and dealing with any consequences should also be theirs. Young people want to make their own decisions and if they have good information, self-confidence and our love to back it up, they will mostly make the best choices.

We need to keep building self esteem into our children. Good self esteem will help them realise that if another person does not respect them and tries to “ride right over them”, then, that person is not worthy of their friendship.

“God, our Father,
You see Your children growing up in an uncertain and confusing world.
Help us to preserve their integrity by showing them that Your ways give more life than the ways of the world and that following You is better than chasing after selfish goals.
May Your ways be obvious to them in the manner in which we live our lives. Amen.”

Wishing you every blessing for the week ahead.

Damita Maka
**RE News**

**Children’s Liturgy of the Word**

Children’s Liturgy will be on this Sunday 24th November during the 10 am Mass. All primary aged children are warmly invited to attend.

**Year 4—Eucharistic Liturgy**

Year 4 will gather as a grade in the Church for a Eucharistic liturgy on Friday 22 November at 10.15 am. All welcome.

**Vincent De Paul Society—Christmas 2013 Hamper Appeal**

Parish:

The conference will again provide Christmas hampers to needy families we assisted during the past year. Including a reduced number of families in St Michael’s Family Centre. Profiles of the families will be displayed in the foyer of the church over the next two weeks. Your generous support for the appeal will be gratefully appreciated. Please return all hampers between Saturday 7th and Saturday 14th December. Thank you.

School:

We are asking each family to donate non-perishable food items to help those in need throughout our parish and surrounding areas. Some examples are; Christmas cake, puddings, biscuits, tinned ham, any tinned food, cereals, soft drinks, cordials, juice. Please send items in to your child’s class before Monday 16th December. Thank you.

**Junior Elevate Dates—Term 4**

Remaining dates this term: 6 December, 20 December.

**Faith at the Fiddler - 21st November**

Special guest Bishop Anthony Fisher OP - Reframing the debate on ‘same-sex marriage’. Faith at the Fiddler is a forum for young people to gather together to discuss issues of faith and spirituality. From 5pm-7pm at The Greenway Room at the Mean Fiddler, cnr Commercial & Windsor Rds, Rouse Hill. An initiative of the Diocese of Parramatta and Catholic Education, Parramatta. Details: Linda Ducksbury tel (02) 9840 5743,linda.ducksbury@parra.catholic.edu.au

**Midnight Mass Choir**

The parish is looking for anyone who would like to be involved in the Midnight Mass Choir. Whether you are a trained singer, would like to have a part in the celebration or simply want to have a bit of fun! All the music is traditional and very simple. Rehearsals will be held each Monday evening in the Church, commencing 25 November at 7.30pm. For any questions, please call Iain Blysma on 0414 266483. All welcome!

**St Michael’s Christmas Brunch**

Last year on Christmas morning we had our very first St Michael’s Christmas Brunch. It was small but beautiful!! We expect that this year will be a lot bigger... We want to make sure that every person in our community will have a place to celebrate Christmas and to experience real community.

If anyone would like to be part of this year’s organising team - please contact David Dowling at david.dowling@raywhite.com or call on 0421 051 029.

**Invitation to participate in Vatican questionnaire**

An invitation from the Bishop of Parramatta, Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP, to participate in the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta’s survey for the Extraordinary Synod on the Family 2014.

**My Dear Sisters and Brothers,**

You may have heard that Pope Francis has called for an Extraordinary Synod (meeting of Bishops) to consider the Pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelisation. This Synod will be held in Rome in October 2014. On behalf of the Pope, the Vatican has asked every Bishop around the world to consult within his Diocese and ensure input to this Synod is received from as many members of the Church as possible.

I ask you, therefore, prayerfully and purposefully to consider the questions prepared by the Vatican. It is important that we respond to these questions after a suitable time in prayer so that our responses may be guided by the Holy Spirit and will properly inform me, the Holy See, the Synod and, ultimately, His Holiness.


**David Ison**

Religious Education Coordinator

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Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) is undertaking a survey of parents and staff in its Catholic schools. Your school is supporting this project.

The results will help improve our communication with you and our ability to support and represent Catholic schools.

Identification of your school is for the purposes of data segmentation.

Responses are completely confidential and will not be revealed to anyone in your school or in the Catholic Education Office.

The survey is being conducted by an independent ISO 20252 accredited research company.

Please help us to help you and your school by completing this survey and encouraging others to do the same. Surveys can’t cater to every opinion so please answer each question with the response that best fits your view.

Depending on your answers, this survey should take between 8 and 20 minutes.
DATES TO REMEMBER

Fri 22 November  Year 4 Eucharistic Liturgy—10.15 am in the Church
Mon 25 November-Fri 6 December  School swimming program—Years 1, 2 and 3
Mon 2 December  P&F Annual General Meeting—7 pm
Mon 2 December-Thu 5 December  World of Maths Incursion
Mon 9 December  Choir at Epping Club—11 am
Wed 11 December  SWIMMING CARNIVAL—WAVES, BAULKHAM HILLS (CONCLUDES 2.15 PM)
Thu 12 December  Year 6 Graduation Awards Ceremony—6.15 pm in the Hall
                   Year 6 Graduation Mass—7.30 pm in the Church
Fri 13 December  Years K-5 Promotion day—Children meet their teacher and class for 2014
Mon 16 December  Student and Citizen of the Term Presentation—2.30 pm in the Hall
Tue 17 December  Year 6 Aquatic Centre Excursion
Wed 18 December  Whole School End of Year Mass—10.15 am in the Church
Thu 19 December—Fri 20 December  Staff Development Days—Pupil Free Days

2014—Date changes

Tue 28 January  Staff Development Day—Pupil Free Day—MAI Testing Years 1-6
Wed 29 January  Staff Development Day—Pupil Free Day—MAI Testing Years 1-6
Thu 30 January  Years 1-6 commence
Fri 31 January  Kindergarten commence 9.20 am, finish at 2.45 pm

Mathematics Assessment Interview (MAI) 2014

MAIs for Years 1-6 will be completed on Tuesday 28th and Wednesday 29th January. A letter with the details for booking assessments will be sent home shortly.

SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAM

The social skill for Week 7 of Term 4 is:

THANKFULNESS

Being able to express feelings of gratitude through words and feelings.

NEWS FROM 3M

In 3M we are learning about Fractured fairy tales and we got write to one ourselves. I did the Giant’s point of view for Jack and the Beanstalk. The Giant told the story of how he didn’t want Jack to steal anything off him and how Jack tried to hurt him. It was fun trying to write the story from a different point of view.

By Felicity Arundell

In HSIE we have been learning about Australian Heritage sites. I have chosen to focus on The Great Barrier Reef. Firstly we researched information about our heritage site and answered some guiding questions in pairs. Now we are finding more interesting facts and creating an iMovie on our site. I didn’t know how to use iMovie but now I do and it is a clever way of presenting my work.

By Patrick Horner

In PDH we have been learning about short and long term physical activities. We have been practicing and performing plays in teams. There are many benefits of physical activity and we should always stay healthy and fit. In Art we have done a lot of work on Australian animals and fairy tale character portraits. Art is a creative way of combining other subjects in a fun way.

By Natasha Richards

In Maths we do a lot of mental computation warm ups in class. We get to play card and dice games with partners or in teams. We get a variety of open-ended tasks and I get challenged a lot and it really makes me think hard. I really enjoy Maths. I enjoy sharing my ideas and we get to learn a lot about how other people do things.

By Ryan Imms

YEAR 3 BIBLES

There has been a delay in receiving the Bibles from the supplier.

Please continue to send in your money to purchase the Bibles. As soon as the Bibles arrive at St Michael’s, your payments will be processed and the Bibles will be forwarded home.

Joanne Angseesing
Good luck to the St Michael’s and Gilroy College teams heading off to Melbourne this week to compete in the National Cheerleading and Dance Championships. St Michael’s will be defending their 2012 National title.

SCHOOL BANKING

The Commbank has advised that the current grey tokens will not be valid in 2014. If you are holding onto 10 or more tokens, now is the time to send them in for redemption. Commbank will only allow one redemption of the grey tokens per person in early 2014.

Thank you for your cooperation

Kim and Tracy
Banking Co-ordinators

UNIFORM SHOP

Thursday 28th November, 8.30-9.30 am
SUMMER UNIFORM PRICE LIST—FORM
Available on our website at the following location:
http://www.stmichaelsbhills.catholic.edu.au/school-notes

P&F Annual General Meeting
all welcome - Monday 2nd December

At the Annual General Meeting all positions in the P&F are vacated including all Executive positions and a new Committee is voted in. If you are interested in a more active role in your child’s school, join the P&F, where many long standing friendships have been made whilst making a real difference to the school.

Survey

We have a survey on our website, please take a look. About 5-10 min of your time. It would give us valuable feedback on 2013 and a view of what you’d like to see in 2014. It’s on our website below, under the “Survey” tab. 100% anonymous. Thank you!

www.pandfstmichaelsbaulkhamhills.com

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Over the next few weeks, our Twilight Fair sponsors will be providing a brochure or a flyer for the school note pouches as a part of their generous sponsorship of our school. Keep an eye out and support the businesses that supported our school.