Dear Parents

One of the most popular activities of the Advent and Christmas seasons is the singing of carols. We have “Carols by Candlelight”, “Carols in the Park”, “Carols in the classrooms” and all express happiness and joy. However, not all carols were composed in happy or joyful circumstances and the “Twelve Days of Christmas” was one such carol. When Henry VIII had his falling out with Pope Clement VII, he set about to dismantle the Catholic Church and to establish the Church of England. Catholics were not permitted to practise their faith openly or even in private; if they were caught, the consequences were severe: heavy fines, imprisonment, even death.

So, Catholics devised a “coded” carol as an instruction tool for their children. It was called the “Twelve Days of Christmas” and its images covered the essentials of their Catholic Faith. The “true love” is God; the “me” is every baptised person; the “partridge in a pear tree” is Jesus and his cross; the “two turtle doves” are the New and Old Testaments; the “three French hens” are faith, hope and charity; the “four birds” are the four Gospels; the “five golden rings” are the Pentateuch which were the first five books of the Hebrew Scripture that contained the “law” or teaching and instructions; the “six geese-a-laying” are the six days of creation; the “seven swans” the Gifts of the Holy Spirit; the “eight maids” the Beatitudes; the “nine ladies dancing” the fruits of the Holy Spirit; the “ten lords” the ten commandments; the “eleven pipers” the eleven faithful Apostles; the “twelve drummers” the twelve articles of faith in the Apostles Creed.

Something to ponder next time you’re singing this well known carol!

Another popular Christmas Activity is to erect the Christmas tree and clothe it with “robes” of decoration. Most probably, the Christmas tree had its origin through a combination of two medieval religious symbols: the Paradise Tree and the Christmas Candle. Around about 1000 A.D. Advent Plays told the stories of creation and the fall of Adam and Eve. Usually, the plays ended with a promise of the coming of a Saviour. The Garden of Eden was depicted by a fir tree with apples hanging on it; it was called the Paradise Tree. The custom moved from being outside plays to being in-home celebrations, where Christians would hang apples and other meaningful items on the tree, including small candles to remind them of God’s gift to them of Christ the Saviour, the “light of the world”. The Christmas Candle was lit on Christmas Eve to symbolise Christ the light of the world; the candle remained lit for the entire Christmas period.

These activities and symbols of Christmas are there to help us to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas: the birth of Jesus, God’s Son. Christmas should be a time of great celebration but within an atmosphere of peace and joy. “I bring to you good news of great joy, for to you is born this day a saviour who is Christ the Lord.” Paraphrase Luke 2:10,11

In Christ’s peace,
John Phillips
SCHOOL MASS
There will be a whole school Mass this Friday 4 December at 9:15 in St Joseph’s Church. All welcome.

CURRICULUM CORNER

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES
A Field Guide, by Marek Bennett

What is Happening In the Creative Arts Production?

Your child may be coming home telling you all about the progress of the Creative Arts Production!

One thing that is most important are the verbs! Verbs are doing or action words - and that is exactly what is happening at St Joseph’s: there is doing and action in their learning.

Building on from last week, the Infographic above has a series of verbs that are categorised under the Multi Intelligences. (References: http://carlajohnson.ca/2012/11/17/what-kind-of-smart-are-you/)

Mrs Slattery and I can safely say that over the last week the students have deeply engaged all of these skills, and are developing deep learning and skills by applying acquired knowledge, skills and concepts from all Key Learning Areas.

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Number, Space and Geometry, Measurement, Science, Human Society and its Environment, Physical Education, Religion, Visual Arts, Dance, Drama, Music are all tuned into making the Creative Arts Production a very enjoyable evening for you all!

Kelly Walters (Project Teacher)
PT&F CORNER

Raffle: Please return your tickets and money for the raffle of the Four Burner BBQ as soon as possible. Thank you. This raffle will be drawn on Presentation Night.

FETE: As you know our Fete will be held THIS SUNDAY 6 December in the school grounds from 11:00am to 2:00pm.

Thank you to all those families who have sent in their creative and colourful gift baskets for our craft stall. They look fantastic! If you still have your basket at home there is still time to send it in by this Friday. Thank you.

Included in this newsletter is a volunteer’s note which we would love you to fill in and return by Friday. You know the saying—“Many hands make light work”! It’s also a great opportunity to get to know some other parents a little better and have a bit of fun along the way! Looking forward to seeing you here on Sunday.

Also attached to the newsletter are the FETE WOOD RAFFLE tickets. If you can spare a few dollars, please return the tickets by Friday or bring them to the fete on Sunday.

Meetings: We held our final meeting for 2015 on 18 November. Thank you to our parents who have attended PT&F meetings throughout the year. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Kathy Dodd (President)  Phone 6778 4774 or Mob. 0423 418 467

URALLA CAROLS IN THE PARK

The Uralla community is holding its annual “Carols in the Park” on Wednesday, 9th December from 5.30pm with a Sausage Sizzle and the Carols will commence at 7pm. St Joseph’s students will be performing a choral item at the Carols.

SCHOOL PLAY

As you have been advised previously, our School Play will be held on Thursday 10 December. The students are well into their rehearsals and the costumes are being created. This is a big night on the school calendar and we know you will enjoy watching your children “in the spotlight”. Students will need to be at school by 5:30pm to be ready for a 6:00pm start. All other information will be provided by their class teachers in a separate note.

LIBRARY BOOKS

It’s that time of year again when we need to chase up all unreturned library books! Please search at home and return all library books as soon as possible. Thank you.

NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC VISIT

On Monday 14 December our school will host a Chamber Music Trio from the New England Conservatorium of Music. Our students will have the opportunity to hear a cellist, violinist and pianist play concert music. They will also learn about the musical concepts listed in the Creative Arts music syllabus. The cost of $4 per student will be covered by the school.
St. Joseph’s School, Wood Street, Uralla
Ph 0267 784063 Fax 0267 783010 Email: admin@stjosephsuralla.catholic.edu.au

ASSEMBLY AWARDS

WEEK 8
Principal's Awards for “Active caring for another in the playground” went to:
Infants - Charlotte Fletcher
Primary - Bailey Redmond
Learning Studio Awards
Infants - Montana Hayes for “Working hard in Maths”.
Primary - Jordan Redmond for “Staying on task and focused in independent activities”.
Our assemblies are held each Friday at 2:45pm in the school hall. All welcome.

BUSH TO BEACH
Last Wednesday our school was visited by two Surf Lifesaving educators who gave a very entertaining and important message to our students on the importance of swimming between the flags at the beach. They also gave them other important messages about staying safe around waterways and keeping our waterways clean.

Dates to Remember

Fri 4 Dec: Mass 9:15am
Assembly 2:45pm
Mon 30 Nov—Fri 11 Dec: School Swimming Program
Sun 6 Dec: FETE
Wed 9 Dec: Uralla Carols in the Park 5:30 for 7:00pm
Thur 10 Dec: 6:00pm School Play (Students to be at school at 5:30pm)
Tue 15 Dec: Presentation Night
Wed 16 Dec: Last day for students
Fri 18 Dec: Term 4 ends

CANTEEN ROSTER
Mon 7 Dec:
Kathy Dodd