This week’s suggested strategy, in the spirit of Pope Francis’ joyful and action-orientated pastoral approach is:

**Be grateful for a difficult challenge. How is the Lord teaching you?**

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**Opening Whole School Mass / Ash Wednesday**

It was a great pleasure today to celebrate our first Mass of the year with the children and so many family members and Parishioners. Congratulations and thank you to Samantha French and Michael Welsh who are sharing the Religious Education Role this year on their thoughtful preparation of the Liturgy and to Fr Alex who shares his faith and joy so deeply with the children.

Today we welcomed and blessed our new Kindergarten children who were just amazing in their engagement in the Mass. We also acknowledged the Leadership Role our Year 6 students have taken on with gusto. I include below the pledge they made at the end of the Mass. It was written with serious consideration by the students and Year 6 teachers and it gives me great confidence to know they are setting the standard for the students.

**YEAR 6 PLEDGE 2015**

We, the Year 6 leaders of Saint John Fisher are privileged to stand before you and are ready to accept the responsibilities and challenges that are expected of us during our final year at St John Fisher. We promise to proudly uphold our school values of respect, responsibility and reconciliation. We pledge to put our words into actions and to always strive to achieve our personal best by displaying a positive attitude and setting a good example.

We **will** unite as one and work together as a team, accepting differences and inspiring each other.

We **will** show respect and care for our environment, making St John Fisher a safe and happy place to learn and play.

We **will** be active problem solvers who make good choices to create a harmonious school community.

We **will** follow in the footsteps of Jesus by treating others with care, kindness and compassion and always helping those in need.

We **will** take on any task and complete it with enthusiasm and commitment and to the best of our ability.

We **will** take responsibility for our words and actions and wear our uniform and badge with pride.

We are honoured to be your school leaders and will strive to achieve our hopes, dreams and goals for this year. With God’s help, we will endeavour to make a difference in both our lives and the lives of those around us. We will continue to grow in faith and knowledge and let our light shine bright and clear in 2015.

**P&F News**

Last night we had a gathering of the P&F Executive to discuss the way this generous group will be supporting families this year. I offer a thank you to Sonya Wallace who volunteered for the vacant Vice-President Role at the end of last year.

Apart from the important organizational matters we had a very interesting proposal from the Breen Family to submit some funding for a Gardening Project. We will keep you updated with this.

Please keep Tuesday 3rd March in your diary for the first P&F General Meeting.

We are sending home another flier today for this Friday’s Big Arvo so if you would like to preorder please have it in by Thursday morning. Please keep an eye out for notes on Friday regarding the Big Arvo in the rare case the weather is too wet to hold the event.

**Sport-a-thon / Cross Country**
The upcoming Sport-a-thon / Cross Country is both a fun sporting event and one of the major fund-raisers for the year. There is a detailed explanation of the event further in the newsletter written from the P&F perspective and you will receive detailed information home soon from the staff perspective. We are looking forward to having the event at school rather than Mingara because we now have a wonderful area on the top playground and because the hiring of the venue was becoming expensive. Please read the information carefully so you know of the procedures on the day.

God Bless

Barry Shanley
Principal

Starting school involves a big change for your child. It is normal for children to have strong feelings as they start to think about these changes, such as excitement about the prospect of going to school as well as nervousness about what lies ahead. Your child may also be feeling sad or angry about leaving early childhood education and care. This includes letting go of relationships formed with educators and other children, as well as a change to their familiar routines. Some common feelings children have during transition to school can include:

- Excitement; sadness; anger; anticipation; fear or anxiety

Understanding and helping your child to handle the feelings associated with starting school will help to reduce their stress and can provide them with positive coping strategies. Young children often have difficulty explaining in words how they feel. Instead they may show their feelings through their behaviour. Some behaviours may be easier to spot like tantrums and crying, while others may be more difficult to notice like being quieter than usual. During the transition to school you may notice the following behaviours emerge or increase in frequency:

- clinging behaviour (eg not wanting to separate from you)
- restlessness (eg difficulty settling at activities, easily distracted, fidgeting)
- withdrawing (eg not participating in familiar activities, less engaged, less willing to persist)
- being anxious (eg shyness, fidgeting, stomach aches, needing excessive reassurance around the routines or plans for the day)
- refusing to comply (eg not wanting to follow rules and routines)
- avoidance strategies (eg increased negotiations around participation)
- planning and organisation difficulties (eg trouble getting started, remembering or finishing tasks)
- increase in crying and tantrums (eg more often or in more situations)
- changes in eating habits (eg loss of appetite, becomes fussy with food, overeating)
- sleep difficulties (eg trouble falling or staying asleep, nightmares)
- regression to younger behaviours (eg bedwetting, thumb sucking, baby talk)
- aggressive behaviours (eg hitting, kicking, shouting).

These behaviours are examples of different ways children respond to challenging situations. They are very typical for children within this age group and you have probably already noticed some of these behaviours during other times of change. However, if the behaviours persist or are interfering with your child's daily life it is a good idea to get further help. (For more information, see the Starting School Getting help when starting school information sheet at: http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/families/starting-school/3-understanding-behaviour

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**MERIT AWARDS**

**MRS AMOR**
Madison H, Lili M, Tenielle W and Rayleigh G

**MRS BURKE**
Halle B, Maddison M and Alyssa G

**MR EDWARDS**
Lucy R and Liam W

**MR FRAZER**
Dylan J, Cooper V and Jessica O

**MRS FOLEY**
Daniel K, Hannah F, Kate C and James B

**MR FRAZER**
Chelsea M and Ella M

**MRS NEWCOMBE**
Amelia F and Kai T

**MRS RODGERS**
Cooper W and Elizabeth B

**MRS VAIL**
Mason D and Scarlett W

**SPORT AWARDS – MR POBJIE**
Kyal B, Thomas M, Ava M and Mackenzie E
CANTEEN ROSTER
FRIDAY 20TH FEBRUARY
Rachel Kohl  Amanda Sophocleous  Vanessa Sims

MONDAY 23RD FEBRUARY
Hayley Munday  Jodie Hughes Holland  Melissa Lalor

WEDNESDAY 25TH FEBRUARY
Rhonda Clifford

FRIDAY 27TH FEBRUARY
Tanya Thorsen  Trudy Romero  Kristy Davis

Celebrating Catholic Schools Week
St Peter’s Catholic College, Tuggerah Lakes, is a co-educational Catholic Secondary School of 1,100 students.
Education at St Peter’s nurtures young men and women to achieve and serve our community based on our core values of Courage, Compassion and Commitment.
An Information evening for Year 7 enrolment for 2016 is being held on Monday 16th March. Sessions run from 4:00pm, 4:30pm, 5:00pm, 5:30pm and 6:00pm in the College Hall. Bookings are not necessary.
A tour of the College campus will follow each information session. Enrolment application packs will be available at each session.

CALENDAR 2015

FEBRUARY
20  Big Arvo 6-8pm
23  Mass Year 5

MARCH
2  Mass Year 1
3  P&F General Meeting 7.30pm
6  Cross Country - Sport-a-thon
9  Mass Year 4
13  Mass Year 5
13  Kindy Mums - Dinner at Mingara
16  Mass Kindergarten
20  Mass Year 4
23  Mass Year 3
27  Mass Year 1
30  Mass Year 6

WYONG PARISH MASS TIMES
St Cecilia’s: Daily Mass: Mon-Sat 8am
Weekend Masses: Sat Vigil 5pm, Sun 7.30am & 9.30am.
Reconciliation: St Cecilia’s: Sat 8.30am & 4.30pm
St John Fisher: Daily Mass: Mon & Fri 9.15am, Tues, Wed & Thurs 8am
Sunday Masses: Sat Vigil: 5pm, Sun 8.30am & 5pm (6pm DST)
Reconciliation: St John Fisher: Sat 4.30pm

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P&F

SPORT-A-THON SPONSORSHIP CARDS
It’s almost that time again for our annual Sport-a-thon. The sport-a-thon is held in conjunction with the school’s Cross Country and is one of our major fundraisers for the year. This year it will be held on the school grounds on Friday 6th March. Students will complete their Cross Country race as well as other sporting activities throughout the day and collect sponsorship money for completing these events. There will be no winners or losers - just kids having fun. Parents and carers are welcome to attend.

This year we are raising money for some fitness equipment on the top playground as well as some more portable goals. We are also working towards putting some smallish playground equipment on the grassed area outside Kindergarten.

Each child will be given a sponsorship card to take home and collect donations. There will also be lucky draw prizes - 2 $50 gift vouchers. To participate in the prize draw, children will need to return their sponsorship card and money by Thursday 12th March. Names will be drawn at assembly on Monday 16th March. Look out for the sponsorship cards in your child’s bag TODAY.

BIG ARVO
The Big Arvo will be held at school this Friday from 6pm-8pm. Thank you to all those families who have already bought tickets, these have now been sent home. Tomorrow is the LAST DAY to pre-purchase hands. Please complete the slip on the Big Arvo flyer within this newsletter. Tickets will be available on the night.

We still need some parents to help with a variety of roles from cooking the BBQ to supervising the jumping castles. If you are able to help, please complete the slip below and return to the office ASAP.

BIG ARVO HELPER SLIP
I am available to help (please tick one or more suitable times)
  o 6:00 - 6:30
  o 6:30 - 7:00
  o 7:00 - 7:30
  o 7:30 - 8:00
  o 8:00 - 8:30

Name: ____________________________
Mobile: ____________________________
Child’s name & class: ____________________________________

THE ENTRANCE HOCKEY CLUB is looking for new players in all age groups. We have our first training 26th February at Wyong Hockey Complex starting at 5.30pm. Please contact Club President Mick on 0418976428 or visit our Facebook page at The Entrance Hockey Club.