Dear Parents and Friends,

Advent
Let us pray this Advent for joy and hope in the coming Lord.
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
ever faithful to your promises and ever close to your Church:
the earth rejoices in hope of the Saviour’s coming and looks forward with longing
to his return at the end of time.
Prepare our hearts and remove the sadness that hinders us from feeling the joy and hope
which his presence will bestow,
for he is Lord forever and ever.

Swimming
Swimming seems to be going well. We are blessed again with predictions for fine weather on
walking days: Monday and Wednesday. Parents are always welcome to walk with us to the
pool, or to meet us there to assist the clothes changing of the youngsters.

Survey
Thank you to those who returned the survey last week. Please find attached a collation of
responses and all but the last of the comments sent. The School Advisory Board discussed the
responses. The most significant pointer for me is that communication will always benefit
from improvement, which is now a goal for me next year. I would like to apologise to those
who expressed displeasure at the tone of the bush dance SMS.

Assembly
We will have our last assembly on Monday at 2.30. Parents are always welcome to attend.

Graduation
On Tuesday 20 December we celebrate the graduation of our Year six cohort with a Mass,
dance and shared food. We wish them well as they prepare to take the next step on their
journey. The changes and growth during the seven years of primary school are extraordinary
but the time goes so quickly! The seniors will plant a growing gift in our gardens with their
prep buddies.

Last Day
On Wednesday 21 December the children have their last day of school which we will
celebrate with a thanksgiving liturgy at 9am. Families are encouraged to join us.

Reports and Portfolios
At the moment we are having some difficulties with the software used to generate the
reports. In fact some staff are pulling their hair out in frustration! We still hope to make them
available to parents on Friday.

Fast ForWord Program
Tomorrow there are two information sessions for interested parents: 9am and 7pm.
This is such a great asset to St Joseph’s School that I would like to thank Mrs Kaye Brown and
Mrs Sue McConachy for their dedication and professionalism.

Positions of Leadership 2012
I am very pleased to announce the staff members who have accepted curriculum leadership
roles in our community for the next two years. I sure you will be supportive of them.
Assistant Principal: Mr Justin Colley; Leader of Christian Life: Mrs Karen McQuade; Wellbeing
Leader: Mrs Prue Vanstan; Literacy Leader: Mrs Kaye Brown; Technology Leader: Mr Paul
Booth; Student Services: Mrs Marg Broderick; Teaching and Learning Leaders (shared): Mrs
Simone Traynor and Mrs Katie Vranken.

John
ALIVE IN OUR FAITH

As we move into the 3rd week of Advent one of the most common questions is why is there a pink candle. Here is some information on the colours of Advent.

The Colours of Advent

Historically, the primary sanctuary colour of Advent is Purple. This is the colour of penitence and fasting as well as the colour of royalty to welcome the Advent of the King. Purple is still used in some traditions (for example Roman Catholic). The purple of Advent is also the colour of suffering used during Lent and Holy Week. This points to an important connection between Jesus’ birth and death. The nativity, the Incarnation, cannot be separated from the crucifixion. The purpose of Jesus’ coming into the world, of the “Word made flesh” and dwelling among us, is to reveal God and His grace to the world through Jesus’ life and teaching, but also through his suffering, death, and resurrection. To reflect this emphasis, originally Advent was a time of penitence and fasting, much as the Season of Lent and so shared the colour of Lent.

In the four weeks of Advent the third Sunday came to be a time of rejoiceing that the fasting was almost over (in some traditions it is called Gaudete Sunday, from the Latin word for “rejoice”). The shift from the purple of the Season to pink or rose for the third Sunday Advent candles reflected this lessening emphasis on penitence as attention turned more to celebration of the season.

In recent times, however, Advent has undergone a shift in emphasis, reflected in a change of colours used in many churches. Except in the Eastern churches, the penitential aspect of the Season has been almost totally replaced by an emphasis on hope and anticipation.

In many churches the third Sunday remains the Sunday of Joy marked by pink or rose. However, most Protestant churches now use blue to distinguish the Season of Advent from Lent. Royal Blue is sometimes used as a symbol of royalty. Some churches use Bright Blue to symbolize the night sky, the anticipation of the impending announcement of the King’s coming, or to symbolize the waters of Genesis 1, the beginning of a new creation. Some churches, including some Catholic churches, use blue violet to preserve the traditional use of purple while providing a visual distinction between the purple or red violet of Lent.

This does not eliminate any sense of penitence from the Season. With the focus on the Advent or Coming of Jesus, especially in anticipating His Second Advent, there remains a need for preparation for that coming. Most liturgical churches incorporate confessional prayers into the services of Advent that relate to a sense of unworthiness as we anticipate His Coming. It is appropriate even in more traditional services of worship to incorporate confessional prayers as part of the anticipation and preparation of the Season.

With the shift to blue for Advent in most non-Catholic churches, some churches retain pink among the Advent colours, but use it on the Fourth Sunday of Advent. It still remains associated with Joy, but is sometimes used as the climax of the Advent Season on the last Sunday before Christmas.

Red and Green are more secular colours of Christmas. They derive from older European practices of using evergreens and holly to symbolize ongoing life and hope that Christ’s birth brings into a cold world. Although red and green are often used as part of the church decorations, they are never used as liturgical colours during Advent since those colours have other uses in other parts of the church year.

Nick Frederiksen
## CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

- Congratulations to **Jesse Long** and **Camryn Holland** for passing their 2nd grading in Karate. Jesse also won U14 boys Championship of the Year in Kumite.
- Well done to **Tayla Nagel** for receiving the Overall Achievement 2011 award in her class in Karate and to **Hardy Nagel** who is 2011 Weapons Student of the Year in his class in Karate.

**WELL DONE!**

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### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

**Vigil Saturday 24th December**
- 6.30pm Family Mass at Yarra Junction
- 6.30pm Family Mass at Mt Evelyn
- 8.30pm Mass at Pallotti

**Midnight Mass at Mt Evelyn**

**Christmas Day 25th December**
- 7.00am Dawn Mass at Mt Evelyn
- 9.00am Mass at Warburton
- 11.00am Mass at Mt Evelyn

Children are welcome to come to the Family Mass dressed as a ‘Nativity Character’ e.g. Shepherd, Angel, Wise Man.

To prepare for the 6.30pm Family Mass at Yarra Junction on Christmas Eve, there will be a Parish Choir practice on **Monday 12th December** at **7.30pm**.

If you would like to part of the choir for this liturgy, please come along.

Parents, grandparents, past students ... All welcome!

*Members of the school choir are welcome to come along – but it is not essential.*

Thank you to our parent helpers who are assisting with the Swimming Program.
Making the most of these holidays

**Often family differences are contained during the year but spill over when normal routines cease over the holiday period.**

You don’t need an instruction manual to make the most of the school holidays. After all, holidays are about kicking your feet up, relaxing and getting away from the usual routines, Right?

But the festive season can be stressful for many. For parents the prospect of keeping children occupied for up to six weeks can be daunting.

Christmas can also be a difficult and lonely time for some. Sole parents and step-parents usually experience particular challenges at this time of the year as family catch-ups cause conflict, and disputes can arise over who children spend their time with.

Often family differences are contained during the year but spill over when normal routines cease over the holiday period.

Here are some ways to help reduce tension over the festive season and make the holiday season enjoyable and fruitful for all:

1. **Be creative with how festivities are organised.**
   - If you are flexible with your arrangements as well as your thinking then the potentially tricky times will flow more easily. For instance, two or more Christmas dinners may be needed so everyone is included.

2. **Mix up the routines.**
   - The best part about holidays is the change from the routines of school-life. Some kids feel comfortable with the routines of school-life and can feel a little lost until the new holiday routine kicks in. Be patient with these routine-junkies! Also make sure you begin adjusting the routine as returning to school comes closer so kids are prepared for going to bed and getting up at earlier times.

3. **Mix ‘me’ time with ‘them’ time.**
   - Plan a mixture of outdoor activities or trips with quiet at-home activities where you can relax and recharge your own batteries. The holidays give you a chance to spend time as a family but you also need to take some time for yourself each day. It helps to let your kids know that you are having some timeout too.

4. **Resist being your child’s home entertainment machine.**
   - Give children opportunities to keep themselves occupied or think of inexpensive, fun ways to keep themselves amused. “I’m bored” is an invitation for kids to keep themselves occupied rather than for you to keep them amused.

5. **Team up with other families.**
   - Whether it is sharing celebrations with other families or just holidaying with friends, holidays offer the chance to broaden your child’s social circle.

Make sure you provide the three types of activities that children want with their parents – i.e. **rituals and celebrations** including family mealtimes, **one-on-one activities** where you spend some time alone with each child; and **unstructured, impromptu activities** such as playing simple games, story-telling and walks around the neighbourhood. These are important relationship-building activities that bind families together and enable you to build up emotional collateral with kids as they move into adolescence.
School Tea-towels and Aprons have arrived. Limited numbers of each are still available. Tea-towels $12 each, or 3 or more for $10 each. Aprons $20 each, or 3 or more for $18 each. Payment must be received before receiving items. See Jo Taylor at Tuesday 13th morning drop off, or at Tuesday 13th afternoon pickup, or text on 0403 504 096 if you want any. First in first served (assuming payment has been made).

On Friday 16th December, straight after morning drop-off of children, helpers are needed to make up the hampers for the Christmas raffle.

PIANO RECITAL
Sports & Performing Arts Stage
St. Joseph’s Primary School Milners Road, Yarra Junction
Monday 12th December
4.15pm
You are invited to hear the children perform their repertoire and duets on the Baby Grand piano.
BYO afternoon tea plate to share.
RSVP: Maria Mithen
0422 842 969

YMCA BUSHFIRE SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Highlights these holidays include Wild Action Zoo, Carnival Day, Tenpin Bowling and an Outdoor Camp!

More information can be found at www.bushfireprograms.ymca.org.au from Friday 25th November or by calling (03) 8736 6520.

Bookings for the Summer holiday period open 8.00am Tuesday 6th December and close 5.00pm Wednesday 21st December. We strongly advise families to book quickly in the booking period as some programs will book out. However, please note early bookings will not take precedence.
School Holiday Activities at Upper Yarra Arts Centre

HOP UNDER A TREE BETWEEN 11 AND 3

Summer School Holiday Fun

Kids can get creative and be inspired by an exciting range of art and craft activities, African dance and great movies during school holidays.

Go to: http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Things_To_Do/Arts_Events/Upper_Yarra_Arts_Centre/School_Holiday_Program for information on daily activities.

Should you have any queries or would like further information please feel free to contact us directly on 03 5966 4500.

Paul’s bottle cap collecting is still going – please keep saving them and bring them in to the office.

Yarra Valley Uniforms

The Uniform Shop is open on Wednesdays. Donna’s contact number is: 0427 516 375.

Remember to keep receipts to claim on your Education Tax Refund next year.

Yarra Junction Library

Horse Fun

Friday January 13th 11.30 -1.30pm. All things horsey. Design a front cover for a horse book to win a prize. Horse crafts, books and film clips. BYO lunch, drinks provided.

Bookings required 59671588

Super Hero Lunch day

Friday January 20th 11.30 - 1.30pm. Come dressed as your favourite superhero, be in it for a prize. Make masks, read stories, watch film clips, have fun. BYO lunch drinks provided.

Bookings required 59671588

UPPER YARRA RSL SCHOOL BENEFITS PROGRAM

Remember $12 Tuesdays are booked up to 3 days ahead – so bookings are essential.

Contact the RSL on: 5967 1771

Mention you are from St Joseph’s School so the school can benefit too!