



DRS NEWSLETTER TERM 1 2017

Dear Families,

Welcome back to school, and a warm welcome to new parents that have joined the school. I am delighted and very honoured to undertake the role of DRS for Mt. Carmel School, and I am very grateful to Liz Hennessy for her continued help and guidance in my new role.

Pope Francis has recently published his second encyclical entitled 'Laudato Si' (Be Praised). The title of the encyclical comes from St Francis of Assisi's famous 13th century hymn praising nature and God's creation.

This papal document calls all people to have open discussions regarding our care of the earth as its guardians, and can be briefly summarised in the following points:

- The spiritual perspective is now part of the discussion on the environment. Until now, the environmental dialogue has been framed mainly with political, scientific and economic language.
- The Pope details the disproportionate effect of environmental change on the poor and on the developing world, with the "worse impacts" being felt by those living in the developing countries.
- He critiques an unthinking reliance on market forces, in which every technological, scientific or industrial advancement is embraced before considering how it will affect the environment and "without concern for its potential negative impact on human beings"
- Pope Francis explicitly states that Laudato Si is now added to the body of the Church's social teaching which should now include teaching on the environment.
- Discussions about ecology can be grounded in the Bible and church tradition.
- Everything is connected—including the economy.
- Scientific research on the environment is to be praised and used.
- Widespread indifference and selfishness worsen environmental problems.
- Global dialogue and solidarity are needed.
- A change of heart is required.

For parents new to a Catholic school, we follow a nationwide RE programme. This programme consists of different strands and modules. The Learning Strands are areas of important knowledge that have been divided up into 6 different sections. These are Jesus, God, Holy Spirit, Church, Communion of Saints and Sacrament. The modules are areas of essential knowledge divided into 3 sections: Prayer, Liturgical year and Sacramental Celebrations. Both modules and strand work is taught at the same time throughout the school.

As part of the programme there is a Family-Whanau book that can be bought from the office. It covers all aspects and levels of the programme throughout the school

and has ideas and explanations to help you and your child with the “at home activities.” It also includes common prayers that the children should know. This is a very useful resource for all families.

We will continue to teach the RE programme on a 2 year cycle. The programme gives the children a breadth of knowledge on each strand, and the children do not necessarily have to have completed the previous year to build on knowledge for the next year. For example the Year 1 Jesus Strand concentrates on Jesus as a friend and the Year 2 Jesus Strand concentrates on How Jesus shows his love.

Odd years we will teach the Year 1, 3, 5 programme and even years we will teach the Year 2, 4, 6 programme. Therefore this year:

Year 1 and 2 = Year 1 programme

Year 3 and 4 = Year 3 programme

Year 5 and 6 = Year 5 programme.

As we have some composite classes, children will be taught according to their year group, therefore, a small number of children will attend a different classroom for their RE lessons.

During the term, and at the end of each strand, your child's RE book will come home. This is an opportunity for you to look at, and discuss with your child the work they have been doing. Please make a comment and sign the work in the space provided before the children bring it back to school.

Dates for this term:

Wednesday 11 th March	Ash Wednesday	11am
Thursday 16 th March	Yr5 and 6 Reconciliation	1:30pm
Thursday 13 th April	Holy Thursday Liturgy	2pm

Lent begins on Wednesday 1st March this year. During this time we prepare for Easter. Please talk to your children about how they might prepare for Easter during Lent.

I hope you all have a lovely term.

kia manaaki Atua koutou

Fiona Jones

DRS