



Prayer

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory and are bathed in its radiance.

Amen



Dear members of our St Maria Goretti's School Community

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.

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.

The third most popular Christmas activity is the setting out of the crib, which is an attempt to reconstruct the stable and manger environment in which Christ was born. The crib, as we know it, dates from St Frances of Assisi who, on Christmas Eve 1223, celebrated the stable scene with a sermon about the humble surrounds into which Jesus was born in the very humble town of Bethlehem.

All these real activities and symbols of Christmas are there to help us to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas: the birth of Jesus, God's Son. It is somewhat of a forlorn wish that peace will be in our home during the Christmas period, as peace runs the great risk of being overrun by feverish activity, which could mean that all the "superficials" are well attended to, while stress levels are given a "boost" and home budgets given a "bust".

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

Prinscripts Series 1 article 20

Thanks for another terrific year of learning at SMG. I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a safe, happy and holy Christmas.

Please remember the true Christmas message and show love to all.

See you back here in 2024.

Until next Year

God Bless



Darren McDonald
Principal



The uniform shop will be open on **Tuesday 23rd** and **Wednesday 24th January**. Times for both days are **9.00am - 3.00pm**. **No appointments necessary.**

Term Dates 2024

Students return to school on Wednesday 31 January 2024

End of Term 1 - Thursday 28 March 2024

Good Friday – 29 March 2024

Term 2 commences - Monday 15 April 2024

Term 2 concludes - Friday 28 June 2024

Term 3 commences - Monday 15 July 2024

Term 3 concludes - Friday 20 September 2024

Term 4 commences - Monday 7 October 2024.

Term 4 concludes - Thursday 13 December 2024



Unfortunately, the choir and ukulele group will not be able to participate at Carols in the Park but it will be a great community event, so if you can, take the opportunity to go along.

News from our Assistant Principal

Kindy Nativity

Congratulations to our wonderful Kindy students for your entertaining Nativity Plays. We thoroughly enjoyed these. Well done to the Kindy staff for preparing the students so beautifully.

Graduation

Our Graduation Mass was held on Tuesday 5th December. This was a beautiful send off for our Year Six students who will now embark on their next life stage. We wish them all the best in the future. Well done to Mr Diep and Miss Rizzi on all your work with our graduating class. I would also like to thank the parent Graduation Committee for organising such a special evening last Friday night. The kids are so blessed to have had such a memorable night.

Whole School Orientation

Our whole school orientation/transition was held on Wednesday 6th December. Students were given the chance to become familiar with their new classrooms and teachers.

End of Year Excursion

Our Year 6 students and teachers celebrated their second last day of school with the end of year excursion at Time zone and Bounce. What a day it was. Thanks to Mr Diep and Mrs Rizzi for organising this event. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Final Day

We finished off our Year with free Christmas dress. This was a lovely way to end our year. I would like to wish everyone a safe and festive Christmas period. I hope you have the opportunity to spend quality time with loved ones. We look forward to seeing everyone returning to us for an action packed 2024.

God bless
Mr Kim Hughes
Assistant Principal



The last few weeks at Kindy have been very busy and lots of fun!

Kindy students have been doing many Christmas activities, including drawing a beautiful Nativity scene, painting a Christmas decoration for their Christmas trees, cooking Christmas biscuits and making some reindeer food so that Santa's reindeer can find their way to all their houses on Christmas Eve!

The students have learnt all about the Story of Christmas which culminated in the very special Kindy Christmas Concerts! For the concerts students told the Christmas Story from the point of view of the Christmas star whose name was Razzle Dazzle! Eventually Razzle Dazzle was given the special job by God to shine above the stable when Jesus was born. The Kindy students had to practice so much; however, it was all worth it because they loved performing for their families and the other children and teachers in the school. That day was also very special as the students were presented with a Kindy Graduation Certificate which means now, they are off to Pre-Primary!

This week the students visited their Pre-Primary classes to meet their teachers and see where they will be next year. They absolutely loved it and are so excited for next year so they can begin Pre-Primary.

It has been such a pleasure to watch the children grow over the year, we have had so many great experiences together and feel very privileged to have been with them over their first year of school. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and joyful start to the new year! Wishing our fantastic Kindy students all the best and we look forward to saying hello next year when they are in Pre-Primary!

Notre Dame Parish News

I would like to extend my prayerful best wishes to all students, staff and parents/caregivers for the festive season.

A sincere thank you to all staff for your commitment, hard work, and support during this academic year. Your efforts are appreciated and valued. Thank you to the parents/caregivers for your continued support of our St Maria Goretti community. A great partnership.

Bible Studies

Each Tuesday evening commencing at 6.00 pm in the Parish Centre.

RCIA

If you know of anyone who would like to join the Catholic Faith community, our RCIA has already commenced in the Parish Centre. Please contact the Parish Office on 9277 4094 for further information.

St Vinnie's Christmas Appeal 2023

Baskets have been placed at both entrances of the Church for donations of in-code non-perishable food items. These will help make up Christmas Hampers to distribute to those in need in our area. Thank you for your ongoing support of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Parish Christmas Raffle

Tickets on sale after all Masses – 3 for \$5.00. Prizes: three Pamper Hampers, Christmas Cake, Ginger Bread House, Nescafe Coffee Machine with cups, biscuits and coffee. All proceeds to the Parish Building Fund.

Safeguarding Induction Training Online Course

All Church workers are invited to attend an *online safeguarding induction*. A Church worker is anyone in the Parish in any role – paid or voluntary.

The session will cover the Safeguarding policies and procedures, the importance of Safeguarding in the Parish, and the role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer. To register, please phone Ingka on 9221 7762 or visit www.safeguarding.perthcatholic.org.au

Working with Children Card

A current WW Children Card is required by all volunteers in the Ministries at the Church. Please check the expiry date on the card. A renewal can be made online or forms are available at the Parish Office. For further information, please contact Leonie Blake at the Parish Office on 9277 4094.

Readers Wanted

If you are interested in participating as a Reader during the weekend Mass, please contact the Parish Office on 9277 4094.

Altar Servers

Altar Servers play a very visible part in Parish liturgy. For the young person, their time of altar service plays an important part in their personal spiritual growth. The Altar Servers' special ministry is to serve in the sanctuary in areas pertaining to the altar and lectern. They assist with the smooth flow of the liturgical rite, enhancing the spirit of worship and prayer.

In July 1992, Pope John Paul II confirmed a Vatican clarification that the 1986 Code of Canon Law #230 allows both males and females of any age to assist at serving Mass.

For further information about this special ministry, please contact the Parish Office on 9277 4094.

The Record Magazine – Issue 42 December 2023

Articles in this month's Magazine include:

Archdiocesan Assembly
World Youth Day 2023
2023 Social Justice Statement Launch
CYM Unite Rally

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You can receive The Record via email. Please contact Jamie O'Brien on 9220 5900 or by email Jamie.obrien@perthcatholic.org.au

Australian Catholics – Issue Summer 2023 – 2024

Articles in this edition's Magazine include:

Sneaky Jesus Playlist – A Journey through the Gospels
Church music pulls a Swiftie
So you think you can liturgical dance ?
Packed and ready

Dr George Sekulla JP
Chairman
Notre Dame Parish Council

Please see attached a User Guide for our new school App.

Username: SMGAPP

Password: Welcome01!

Android

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.edu.wa.smg.schoolapp&hl=en_AU&gl=US

iOS <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/st-maria-gorettis-school/id6462846139>

It is important to click on the **"more"** button followed by **"settings"** and then **"subscriptions"** to turn off any classes that your child is not in. This will prevent you getting notifications that are not relevant to you.

If you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out.



Carols in the Park
is back for the 2023
holiday season!

Join us for an evening of joy, community spirit, and a whole lot of festive fun. There'll be:

- Carols from local schools and performers
- Face painting and craft activities
- An amazing firework display
- and a visit from Santa himself!

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📅 Friday 8 December
🕒 5pm to 9pm
📍 Faulkner Park, Progress Way, Cloverdale
🎟 reserve your free tickets via Eventbrite:
carols-in-the-park-City-of-Belmont.eventbrite.com.au

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64 Morrison Street, Redcliffe, WA 6104 | T: 08 62792000 | E: admin@smg.wa.edu.au | www.smg.wa.edu.au