



St Francis Xavier Catholic School



To Love, To Learn and To Serve
Kia Aroha, Kia Akona, Kia Aro Atu

No. 16 Rāpare-Thursday 3rd December-Hakihea

Tena koutou katoa. Dear parents, caregivers and friends of our school,

Although it has been a school year with a difference, it has to be said that despite everything that has happened we have had another very successful year.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, I do believe that we have so much to be grateful for. As a country and community we have responded well to the pandemic and although there will always be room for improvement, it is still nice to know that we can enjoy Christmas with whanau and friends.

Personally, I wish to thank our school staff for their efforts and teamwork over the past year. They are a really fabulous bunch and they deserve a great deal of credit for the work that they all do. Special thanks also to the Board of Trustees, Parish and PTFA for their unwavering support.

As Christmas approaches, we hope that you will be able to join us and attend some of year end activities that are important and identify us as a Catholic school. It's a busy time but Christmas for us is significant in the Church calendar. It is the time when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the son of God.

Therefore, make sure that you have it in your diaries that the Year 6 Leavers Mass is on Tuesday 8th December at 1:30 pm, the Junior Nativity is on Wednesday the 9th at 9:30 am and on Friday the 11th of December at 9 am we have our final end of year assembly and Year 6 prize giving.

On behalf of our school staff I want to thank you, the parents of students and friends of our school, for the work that you do in support of us. Your children are special and we try our very best to meet their needs, but we have to do this walking alongside you. Our school continues to be a bright vibrant place where the emphasis is on the delivery of a Catholic Education and high standards. Your valuable contribution in supporting this goal has been truly appreciated.

Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse In Care:

For the next two weeks the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care will be listening to survivors of abuse that arose within Catholic schools and parishes, as well as abuse that arose within the Anglican Church and Salvation Army Church. Their statements will be made in open sessions. There are significantly more survivors of abuse who have chosen to provide evidence in closed sessions to the Royal Commission.

While this may be a difficult time for our communities, this is an important process to go through so that we may listen to the experiences of survivors, acknowledge failings, support the justice and reconciliation process, and look forward to the future with hope.

Our bishops and congregational leaders requested that churches and faith based organisations be included in the Commission process, in order to have this significant opportunity to acknowledge the past, listen and learn from the experiences of survivors, and participate in seeking justice.

There are many and complex reasons why survivors don't find it easy to disclose abuse. Different things can prompt people to come forward to share their experiences. By talking openly about ways for people to come forward, we can enable this to happen and so provide a way to support these survivors.

Over the next week you will hear of Catholic schools, priests and brothers being referenced in the statements from survivors.

If you, or someone you know, was abused while in Catholic care, please contact the Royal Commission or the Catholic Bishops Support Agency via email prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz or phone 0800 114 6222.

Staffing:

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Sheldon Wilson for stepping into Room 19 this year. Shel has been a fabulous relief teacher and we wish her and her family all the best as they move to Wellington next year.

We also farewell Mrs Shelley Crawford, our Family Worker. Shelley is retiring at the end of this year but her work with families and students will not be forgotten. We wish you all the best, Shelley.

Thank you also to Mrs Jan Bryant. Jan has been teaching a New Entrant class and we have all appreciated her work with our new five year olds. Congratulations to Whaea Sam Diamond and Mrs Vivienne Clegg who have been permanently appointed to our staff and also to Ms Daniella Nieldu who has been appointed as a fixed term teacher for 2021.

Ms Emily Malone is working part time at St Francis next year as she is completing her Masters degree. Emily will be here for 2/3 days a week and during this time she will be teaching music across the school.

Attendance Dues:

Please remember that Attendance Dues are compulsory in a Catholic school. If you haven't settled your annual payment then please do so as soon as possible. Should you be experiencing any financial difficulty then please see Mrs Deborah Rudolph, our school Office Manager or contact her by email at office@sfx.school.nz.

Craig McKernan
Principal

Address: 1 Percy Street, Whangarei 0112 Phone: 09-4371039 Cellphone: 027 2784303

Email Office Manager: office@sfx.school.nz Website: sfx.school.nz Email Absences: absent@sfx.school.nz



Religious Education



This Sunday's Reading:

(Second Sunday of Advent) Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11; 2 Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1: 1-8

Thought for the week:

“May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfilment into the Advent of our lives.”

Advent

What is Advent?

Advent is the Church season just before Christmas. It is considered a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ, a time for conversion, anticipation, hope and thanksgiving. Advent begins on the Sunday nearest November 30th, the feast day of St Andrew the apostle. Since the start date changes yearly, so does the length of the Advent season. This year, Advent begins on December 2nd.

The word Advent means “the coming” in Latin. Beginning as early as the fourth century, Advent has been a time of good cheer and spiritual reflection. It was originally a time when converts to Christianity readied themselves for baptism. Today, many Christian families have adopted the tradition of lighting the candles on an “Advent Wreath” and using the “Advent Calendar” to count down the days until Christmas.

During this time the school will focus on Advent in their classes, where they will reflect on members of Jesus’ family.

Society of St Vincent de Paul - Christmas Gifts

Saint Vincent de Paul Society are looking for unwrapped gifts for their Christmas parcels for teens and younger children e.g. cars, balls, blocks, books, body wash, playing cards, hair and nail products.

Chocolate and tinned biscuits are also welcome. If you would like to donate an item, it can be sent to your child’s classroom. We will collect them and give them to St Vincent de Paul on your behalf. These gifts will then be delivered to families.

Sacramental Programme 2021

Reconciliation, Confirmation & First Communion programme, for **baptised** children who will be 8 years of age, or older by Easter 2021, will begin in **February 2021**.

For enquires, please phone Janet at the Parish Office 437 7902

Dates to Remember

Year 6 Leavers Mass

Our Year Six Leavers Mass (which involves the whole school), will be on **Tuesday 8th December** in the church, starting at **1:30pm**.

Nativity

Preparations are quietly under way for the Nativity this year. We are blessed to have the talents of the Year 1 and 2 teachers, to help put together a wonderful reminder of the real ‘reason for the season’.

We will be holding our Nativity for parents on **Wednesday 9th December** at **9:30am** in the church.



Final School Assembly

Our Final School Assembly, (Year 6 Prize Giving), which most of the school attends, will be on **Friday 11th December** in the church, commencing at **9:00am**.

Ash Wednesday 2021

Ash Wednesday is on Wednesday 17th February 2021. Please note this date on your calendars. We will begin our Lenten journey with a school Mass at 9am.

Please keep checking the events timetable for dates of all school events.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support throughout the year.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and all Christ’s blessings for the New Year.

Yours in Christ,

Maria Wilson

DRS – Director of Religious Studies



Lost Property



Please, please, please come and look through the lost property in the foyer at the end of room 1. There are mountains of un-named and un-claimed items, including sandals. All lost property that is not claimed will go to our uniform pool at the end of the year.

SFX Book Amnesty is on again ...

Please look for any journal books, readers or library books at home or in school bags. We are doing our annual stocktake shortly and need these books in as soon as possible.



Enrolments for Saint Francis Xavier Catholic School



If your pre-schooler is not yet enrolled, or your son/daughter is leaving at the end of the year (not including year six students) then please contact our school office as soon as possible.

Year 6 Beach Ed

A big thank you to the parents who are helping out with our year 6 classes at Ruakaka beach this week. Your time and generosity (and willingness to get wet) is very much appreciated.



School Reports

Teachers have been busy completing your child's end of year school report.

School reports will be sent home on Friday 11th December.

Enclosed with the report is an introductory letter from your child's 2021 teacher and a 2021 class stationery list.

Ordering School Stationery for 2021

Our school stationery is available to purchase on line from OfficeMax from the 11th of December.

When you order online in December you'll receive a FREE gift and you may pay now or in installments.

- Go to: myschool.co.nz
- In the 'Back to School' search school name box, type: St Francis - our full school name will appear (Whangarei), click.
- Click 'start' in the view requirements list box.
- Enter your child's name and year level details. (Student ID not required.)
- Under your child's year level, select the + sign to reveal teacher and room number details.
- Select your class teacher and room number then follow the prompts.

Got five minutes?

OfficeMax
MySCHOOL



Your child's back to school class list is ready to shop now at myschool.co.nz or call us on **0800 724 440** Mon to Fri, 8.30am – 5pm.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The pop-up pool is always a huge success and we appreciate your help in putting it up and taking it down again. We will need lovely helpers again to take down the pool this

Saturday 5th December - 8am

Please mark this date on your calendar and see Mrs J or email her at glenys@sfx.school.nz if you can help.

Literacy Tip #18

Letters to Santa!

When writing letters to Santa it is great to get them to start with a message of thanks for something they received last year. This serves two purposes, the first is that it encourages an attitude of gratitude and the second is that it will encourage them to write in full sentences instead of simply writing a list of "wants". As an added bonus, you then have a very clear idea of what your child wants for Christmas.

Book of the week: *The Santa Trap* by Jonathan Emmett (Christmas Sophisticated Picture Book)

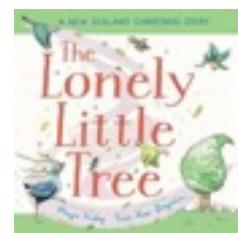


Literacy Tip #19

Christmas cards!

Instead of buying Christmas cards this year, why not have a crafts day? You could use stickers, felts, pens, printed pictures, cut out scraps of coloured paper and anything else you may have around your house. There are some great Christmas card designs online or simply let your child's imagination run wild. They could write Christmas messages and bible verses on the inside and at the end, you will have some beautiful, personal cards which I'm sure your family and friends would love to receive.

Book of the week: *The Lonely Little Tree* by Moya Kirby (Christmas Picture Book)



Athletics Days

We have had a fabulous couple of days at the Whangarei Athletics track this term for our year 4, 5 and 6 students. On Friday 13th November, we had a great day of athletics with our children competing in different track and field events. A team of 43 children qualified for the Whangarei Primary Schools athletics champs and have enjoyed another excellent day at the athletics stadium yesterday. Both days have seen children perform to the very best of their abilities with great results. Congratulations to all our competitors!

A huge thank you to our parents and supporters for helping to make these days such a success for our children.

↓ Check This Out ... ↓

Student Success

Damien and Gia Fernandes recently competed in the New Zealand National Jiu Jitsu Tournament. Damien participated in the Boys 'Junior' Yellow belt 36.3kg category where he was placed 4th. Since there were no participants in her age / weight / belt girls category, Gia participated in the Boys 'Mighty Mite' Grey belt 22.7kg category where she received a silver medal.

The PTF would like
to wish all our families a very
Merry Christmas
& Happy
New Year



Well done to you both!



Year 3 & 4 EOTC

This year we were challenged with a variety of weather. But we managed to have a great time. All children learnt new skills, knowledge and had a lot of fun. It was a great way to end the year on a positive note. The year 3's went paddle boarding and to HeadsUp Adventures (to learn survival skills in the water and in the outdoors). The year 4's went to Adventure Forest and Surfing at Matapouri and learnt skills they will use on camp next year. Four classes got to walk the Hatea Loop, learning about the culture and heritage of Whangarei by answering a range of discovery questions given to them. Thank you to the parents who came and supported the adventures it is much appreciated. We are all very proud of our year 3 and 4 students and how they demonstrated perseverance, kindness, team work and resilience throughout the experiences. A great three days had by all.





SCHOOL EVENTS

Dates and times for events are subject to change.
Please check this fortnightly newsletter for any changes.

December

- 2nd to 4th Yr 6 Beach ED
3rd Feast of St Francis Xavier
3rd 6 pm Choir singing - Ray White Hatea Loop Challenge
5th POP UP POOL REMOVAL - 8am
8th 1:30 pm Leavers Mass - whole school attending
9th 9:30 am Nativity Performance in the church for parents/caregivers
11th 9 am Final School Assembly - Yr 6 prize giving
11th Reports go home
15th Carol Singing
15th 12:30pm Last day of school for 2020 - school closes at 12:30pm

February 2021

- 2nd 8:45 am Term one starts for 2021

Holiday Programme

Free summer Sport Programme:

11 - 15 January, 18 - 22 January, 10
am - 2 pm

Johnston Crawford
Indoor Cricket Centre,
79 Okara Drive, Whangarei.
Register now!

2021 TERM DATES

TERM ONE:

2nd February to Fri 16th April
(Easter holidays: Good Friday 2nd
April, Easter Monday 5th April **AND**
Easter Tuesday 6th April.)

TERM TWO:

Mon 3rd May to Fri 9th July

TERM THREE:

Mon 26th July to Fri 1st October

TERM: FOUR:

Mon 18th October to Tues 14th
December

Confirmation and First Holy Communion Children from St Francis Xavier School

Children from St. Francis Xavier School who were confirmed by Bishop Michael Gielen on Thursday 5th November 2020 and made their First Holy Eucharist on Sunday 8th November 2020 with Father Chris Martin.

Khloe Ah Chong, Lucas Andrae-van den Bosch, Dakota Benton, Tainui Besselink, Taya Beuker, Joshua Bourke, Riley Bourke, Rylee Brown, Daniel Bucknell, Jessica Cameron, Zchiara Casimiro, Mikayla-Jane Chapman, Connor Civil, Izabella Currie, Mitchell Dalton, Farrah Davis, Ngaia Davis, Rye Devlin, Albie Fannin, Indie Fannin, Sanuthi Fernando, Kierra Gage-Nepia Te Puni, Kara Gee, Pascale Gee, Anna Hewitt, Nathan Hewitt, Kayla Houston, Serven Hotere-Davies Takimoana, Eve Howell, Noah Jones, Lana Johnston-McCluskey, Liam Kemp, Olivia Kemp, Evie King, Angeline Littin, Wolfgang Lumbera, Marabella Macpherson, Nelly McGregor, Kate Mainland, Ashriel Marcial, Taarite Tirikai, Maeva Marie, Emelia Patelesio, Jealand Patosa, Elvira Pereira, Fletcher Pool, Hewitt Pool, Luke Roulston, Athalia Saunders, Karien Schutte, Mayson Telfer and Aiden Ternio.