On Monday 15th February Year Six were presented with their leadership bands at Monday Morning Prayer. Ms Hardy and Mrs O’Rourke asked us if we agreed to follow the school agreements of being respectful, being safe and doing our personal best. We were given these bands which clearly show our leadership role in Holy Cross as they are a different colour to the bands other students receive. The bands also show that we take on the role as leaders by setting an example for the younger students, showing respect to our peers and how to work as a team.

Part of being a Year Six leader is taking care of a Kindergarten buddy. Year six spent time with all of Kindergarten yesterday and were given our Kinder buddies. We enjoyed reading stories, talking, playing on the equipment with them and getting to know more about them. Year Six were very excited about getting our Kindy buddies and are looking forward to being with them throughout their first year of school.

Written by: Jacob Salkovic, Roisin Gallacher and Leayah Leano
CAPTIVATE is the creative and performing arts program for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Parramatta. It provides learning and performance opportunities for students and connects them with Australia's leading creative arts professionals and their wealth of experience and networks. CAPTIVATE offers students the opportunity to collaborate and engage with students from other schools to enrich their performing skills and experiences through combined school programs in music.

Is your child interested in joining the Combined Primary Choir?

This year students in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will have the opportunity to be involved in the Combined Primary School Choir which will perform in a Music Showcase on the evening of Wednesday 22nd June, 2016. This performance will be at Nagle College, Blacktown South. Participation of the students is voluntary and does not require any audition. This is a wonderful opportunity for the children to showcase their creativity and talents. Permission notes are due back by Wednesday 17th February, 2016. Please contact Mrs Gilmore or Mr Weston if you require any further information.

MUSIC String Things

The String Things Program is a classroom-based foundation method in string playing which focuses on students in Years 4 and 5. Our school has a class set of string instruments for each student to use in the lesson. We are fortunate to have Mr Komorowski who delivers the program, Mr William Tu (Music Specialist Teacher) who assists with the cello and Mr Phil Rooke as our Teacher Educator from the Catholic Education Diocese. Individual and small group lessons outside of the classroom program are also available for students in Years 4, 5 and 6 on a modest user pays basis. Please see Mr Komorowski for further details.
**PBS4L Update**

**What is Positive Behaviour Support for Learning?**

- A framework to enhance the capacity to educate all children by developing research based, school wide and classroom support systems.
- PBS4L provides systems for schools to design, implement and evaluate effective school wide classrooms, non-classroom and student specific plans.
- Instruction in social skills
- Helping students regulate their own behaviour
- Creates effective environments where students make positive behaviour choices that support academic success.

PBS4L plays an important role in the students’ learning at Holy Cross. The students are involved in regular lessons focusing on social skills related to our school agreements – We are safe, we are respectful, we do our personal best. These agreements are taught, modelled and practised in different areas of our school each day.

The students receive ‘rainbow’ tokens each day in their learning spaces and on the playground for being safe, respectful and doing their personal best. Whilst each grade collects rainbow tokens they are all working towards a different reward.

Some questions that can be used to discuss PBS4L at home are:

*What did you earn a rainbow for this week?*

*How can you do your personal best during Mathematics?*

*How can you be respectful when working with your TRIBE?*

*What does it look like when you are learning as a class/grade on the mat?*

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**COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

At Holy Cross our staff work hard to ensure that we are catering for each student's needs, abilities and interests. There are also many ways in which families can support their children to be prepared for learning at school each day. One important way is making school attendance a high priority in your family. It is essential that each student is at school on time and prepared for school to take advantage of every learning opportunity. Children who are at school on time settle into routines very effectively and become confident and in control of their day ahead. Some children can become anxious and stressed when they have missed the regular morning routines.

If your child is late or absent they must produce a note written by the parent/caregiver and signed by the parent/caregiver. You have seven days to produce the note or the absence or lateness will be formally recorded as unexplained. You may not be aware that when a student is late to school, a ‘partial absence’ is recorded on the roll book. The class roll book is a legal document and is monitored within the school and regularly audited by external agencies.

There are times that students will be sick and cannot attend school. This is understood. Ongoing lateness however and unexplained absenteeism places the students learning and wellbeing at risk. Our team of teachers support all students who are absent in various ways.

Legislation requires that if you have a planned absence, a written application must be lodged with the Principal before your child/ren are absent from school. With a change of legislation, there is more paper work that must be completed for absence. Families are discouraged from having family holidays during term time.

Please be aware that this communication is to promote wellbeing for all students and a culture of high expectations and success for all.
Lent - Project Compassion

This week families will receive a Caritas Project Compassion money box. Project Compassion fundraising has been a foundation of Social Justice awareness in the diocese for many years. Project Compassion is run by Caritas Australia, the single largest fundraising initiative of Caritas and is their largest source of income. Without Project Compassion, Caritas is unable to provide the relief and aid that they do.

The work of Caritas touches the lives of people right across the globe, empowering communities in need to raise living standards, nutrition and health, employment and happiness.

During Lent, almsgiving is a significant way in which we can help others and in doing so help us reflect on our own lives in preparation for Christ’s coming at Easter. I encourage everyone to place your Project Compassion box somewhere visible at home, as a reminder to be charitable. The loose coins floating around under car seats, in the cracks of the lounge or in the bottom of our pockets make no difference to us though can help change the lives of others.

Opening School Ash Wednesday Mass

Thank you to everyone who were able to join us for our Opening School Ash Wednesday Mass last week. A special congratulations to our Kindergarten students for how reverently they participated in the mass as well as Year 6 who assisted them.

Wednesday Parish Mass

Next week, Year 6 will attend mass in the library at 9am for our first Wednesday parish mass for the year. Mass is approximately 30 minutes and is a lovely way to begin the day. All parents are invited so please join us if you are able. Next week, Year 5 will lead the Wednesday parish mass.

First Eucharist Enrolment

Reminding parents of students in Year 4 or older that enrolment forms for this year’s First Communion are available online now at the parish website: www.stjohn23rd.com

These forms need to be completed and handed in at one of the enrolment Ritual Masses on Saturday 12th at 6pm, or Sunday 13th March at 9am, 10:30am or 6pm.