Dear Parents,

Thank you to everyone who attended our Dance on Monday night, it was a fantastic evening. The children looked wonderful and danced beautifully, and a few parents dusted off dancing talents that had been well hidden which was great to see! It added to the fun of the evening. It is so important that as a school community we spend time together getting to know one another in a social setting, because our children spend a lot of time together and in a small community they will for many years to come. It is by getting to know one another that we develop a deeper understanding and respect for each other and each other’s children.

Schools are a complex social setting. Our school days are the only time in our lives when we mix with people with very different backgrounds, ideas, interests, values and ideals; but one thing we all have in common is an absolute love for our children and a deep desire to provide what is best for them. To do this well we also need to get to know each other, as it takes a community to raise a child and sometimes that is a difficult thing to do. When we know one another we can better respect each other’s different points of view and the things that are important to each of us. It also helps us to clarify our own parenting priorities and the path along which we want to steer our children.

This week as we reflect on the events of Holy Week we are reminded of how important it is to stand up for those things we believe in, the things we hold dear, even if it feels like we are going against the tide. If we don’t, we become like leaves in the breeze, blowing from one idea to another according to the fad of the moment. We become easily manipulated by popular opinion, jealousy and our own insecurities, the way the crowds did in Jesus’ time. As we read the scriptures around Holy Week we learn that when we let these negative feelings run our lives nothing good comes from it.

I would also like to take this time to thank you all for the support you have given me this term. It is very much appreciated.

In week 2 of next term I would like to organise a parent meeting where we can discuss some ideas I have to better use our parent body and also to provide an opportunity for teachers to touch base again with homework expectations, routines and things that are happening in each classroom.

I wish you all a very happy and holy Easter and a restful and safe break. School will resume on Monday 20th April. Children who have qualified for Zone Cross Country, keep up the training.

Sue Darby
Acting Principal

EASTER RAFFLES: We have been having small Easter raffles each day this week (which are only for students). Tomorrow’s tickets will be 50c each as there is a bigger prize pool!

JUST MACBETH: Yesterday’s excursion to Bellingen to see “Just Macbeth” was great fun. It was fantastic for our students to see actors on stage – some children would never have experienced live theatre before. Reactions were mixed; some students absolutely loved it but others weren’t quite sure what to make of it!
Nevertheless, it was a great experience. If your child is interested in being involved in live theatre, the Dorrigo Drama Club is holding auditions for its next children’s production on Tuesday 21st April (see ad on last page).

“Just Macbeth” performance

FATHER JIM’S MASS: It was lovely to have Father Jim back in Dorrigo for a farewell Mass on Friday. The students read and sang beautifully, and Father Jim loved his goodbye gift (a quilted knee rug). There were a few tears and lots of happy memories – we’ll miss you, Father Jim.

Father Jim & the students

EASTER MASS TIMES:
Holy Thursday
Mass in Bellingen, 5:30pm
Good Friday
Stations of the Cross - Urunga 11am, Bellingen 10am, Dorrigo 10am
Solemn Liturgy - Bellingen 3pm, Dorrigo 3pm
Holy Saturday
Vigil Mass, Bellingen 7pm
Easter Sunday
Mass – Urunga 8am; Dorrigo 10am

PRESENTATION OF CROSS COUNTRY AWARDS / HOLY WEEK PRAYER SERVICE:
We will be presenting our Cross Country medals and ribbons tomorrow afternoon at 2:15pm in the church, followed by a Holy Week prayer session and reflection. All are welcome! This will take the place of our assembly for this week.

LINK TO SCHOOL WEBSITE:
http://moodle.dorplism.catholic.edu.au/

PARISH MASSES: Sunday Mass – 10:00am. All are welcome.

WORLD AUTISM DAY, 2nd APRIL 2015: Thursday is World Autism Day and I live with Autism every day. My name is Ben Ridge and I am in Year 6. When you have Autism it is hard to understand things especially instructions, and it is really hard if there are a few of them in a row. I find it really hard to organise my thoughts and work out how to start a task because there are

PARENT ASSEMBLY: The Parent Assembly has money available again this year to provide education for parents. If you have some area of parenting that you would like to learn more about please talk to Cath Hartin or Mrs Darby and we will start a list and try to source people who can help us with your requests.

CHILDREN MISSION PARTNERS: All of the Mission Partners boxes need to be returned to school tomorrow. It doesn’t matter if there is only $1 in them, every bit helps with the work this tireless charity does all over the world.

Teddy Bears’ Picnic photos
so many ways that it could be done and I have no idea which way would be the best. When I was younger I didn’t worry much about other people, I just lived in my own world and I only worried about what I was doing. I would get really angry when people wanted me to do other things. I would only talk about what I wanted to talk about and wouldn’t listen to anyone else. I don’t do that as much any more but it still happens. I have to really work hard on letting other people speak and it is still hard to listen to them and I don’t always understand what they say but I try. I don’t always get it right but my friends don’t tease me about it. When I was little I would get really annoyed when people teased me. I would get angry and it was hard to find my words to tell them to stop so I got into a lot of fights and trouble. I didn’t understand why they were picking on me but I knew they were.

For most people it is hard to make new friends but if you have autism it is really difficult. It is hard to know what to say and it is hard to know if they are saying a joke and being funny or being mean, it’s hard to understand how they are feeling when you look at them (read their body language) which most other people can do easily. Old friends are good because they know me and they understand that I think differently but with new friends it is hard to know what to say and harder for them to get what I mean. When I’m with new people it is hard to know what to talk about and sometimes I talk about something different from what they said and they look at me funny but not in a good way.

When you have Autism or for me anyway it is harder to understand things, you have to work harder to understand and see how ideas and work fits together. For example I only learnt to ride a bike last year but now I’m good at it, so once I learn something I can remember it. So if you have a child or a friend with Autism, try to help them and give them a fair go because they are great people.

by Ben Ridge

---

**CAPTAIN’S AWARD**: Congratulations to Evie Chong, who received a Captain’s award for being kind to others on the playground.

**GOOD LEARNING AWARDS**: Class awards went to Cash Gibson for excellent recall of number facts and writing and recognising digits; Charlie Lower for improving in reading fluency and being able to match words to text accurately; Beau Stockton for great application in everything mathematical; and Annie Sibanda for being able to critically reflect on the effectiveness of her own writing.

**COMING EVENTS**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL</th>
<th>WED 1ST</th>
<th>Zone Cross Country, Woolgoolga POSTPONED until Wed 22nd April</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THURS 2ND</td>
<td></td>
<td>• World Autism Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Holy Week prayer service &amp; Cross Country presentation, 2:15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Last day of Term 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MON 20TH</td>
<td></td>
<td>Term 2 begins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MUSIC LESSONS FOR 2015**: Expressions of interest are invited for music lessons at Mt St John’s. Last year’s piano and guitar lessons were a great start. This year I hope to provide private lessons at competitive prices and offering discounts for struggling families. The details are yet to be decided but we hope to deliver quality tuition everyone can participate in. Please talk to Sue Darby or Cathy at reception to indicate your interest. Sincerely, Rob Harpley (last year's Music Stars tutor).

**GFS KIDSPLUS** meets every Wednesday during term time from 3-5pm in the Anglican Church Hall. There is food, fun, games, worship and craft. Students from Kinder through to Year 10/11 are welcome. Cost is $1 per session – new pupils always welcome. Contact Rev Mike on 6657 2015.

**DORRIGO DRAMA – KIDS ON STAGE**: The next Dorrigo Drama Club Kids on Stage Production is happening! And there’s a whole lot of song and dance about it!! The production will be “A Magical Mystery Tour” by Pene Charles. If you’re interested in being involved, please be at the Old Gazette Theatre at 3.30pm on Tuesday 21st April. Any questions, please ring Dina Luciani on 66 572243
DORRIGO HIGHLANDERS SOCCER: The teams are set, training is underway and games are starting soon with boots on for all teams starting Saturday 18 April. The Dorrigo Highlanders Football Club has teams registered across all age groups from 8 years to open, boys, girls, men’s and women’s. And for our up and coming stars it is MiniRoos in Dorrigo each Saturday morning. Check your school noticeboard for team details. Players need to have all fees paid before taking the field to ensure cover for insurance. Please have your fees ready to pass on to your coach at training or organise for direct payment to the Dorrigo Highlanders account at BCU with the player’s name as reference. Payment enquiries can be made to Barb Webster on 6657 2703. Draws for all teams will be available online at www.northcoastfootball.com.au. Cancellations for wet weather are also posted to the website.

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AT DORRIGO LIBRARY: Wed 8th April, 11am – CD Weaving – using old CDs and wool, create some colourful hangings
Wed 15th April – Sun Catchers – using paper plates, Contact and leaves, create some magical sun catchers.
Bookings required – ph 66572234

DORRIGO ANGLICAN CHURCH
JOIN US FOR HOLY WEEK AND EASTER
Maundy Thursday 2nd April @6pm - Meal and Agape
Good Friday 3rd April All-age Worship 9am
Easter Day Sunday 5th April 7.30am Traditional Communion
10am Family Celebration with Communion
More details call Rev Mike on 66572015
michaelaridge@outlook.com

The CSO has sent the article below to parish schools for distribution to our school community.
It is self-explanatory and goes to the heart of our reason for existence.

REMOVING SCHOOL FREEDOMS IS IN BAD FAITH

The Greens and Independent Education Union are attacking the core of diversity

TONY FARLEY

Not so long ago people whose beliefs and behaviour were different from the mainstream were exposed to ridicule, social isolation, and sometimes even legal sanctions. While Australia is a much more tolerant place today, intolerance has not disappeared. Some groups even dress up attempts to create a faux monoculture with the language of equality and diversity.

For example, in NSW the Greens and the Independent Education Union want to change the law which will undermine tolerance, diversity and cultural sensitivity in our communities.

They want legislation changed to stop the freedom faith-based schools have always had to employ people who believe in accordance with the doctrine, beliefs and teachings of their religion.

In other words, they want to take the faith-component out of our faith-based schools, the very reason why these schools exist.

Islamic, Christian, Jewish, Orthodox and other faith-based schools are an essential part of Australia’s education system. They sit alongside public and other schools in an educational landscape that offers a wide range of choice and tradition. The growth in the popularity of these schools says much that is good about Australia. They reflect a rich, diverse society that is both multicultural and multi-faith.

In addition to this, the freedom to live, express and practice your faith is a fundamental human right, as is the right of parents to choose to have their children educated in an environment that is consistent with their family’s beliefs and values.

Why do the Greens and the IEU want to violate these fundamental human rights? Do they think being religious is somehow inconsistent with being a good Australian citizen?

The Greens’ concept of tolerance only seems to extend to people who think like them. They seem oblivious to Australia’s cultural diversity that people from other cultures and faiths might have different views to their own. It leads to the sort of cultural superiority that greets Australian immigration in the 1930s.

The IEU’s position is even more baffling as it is a direct attack on their own membership. Why won’t the union support the work of faith-based schools? They are the only ones who can support their own schools.

Catholic and other faith-based schools employ people from a range of different faith backgrounds. The expectation is simply that those employees support and act in accordance with the mission, teachings and ethos of the religion – to maintain the very integrity of the school’s purpose.

The dangerous authoritarian edge to the IEU and Greens push is also alienating many while Jewish and Muslim schools would no longer be allowed to require their staff to support their mission, other organisations — like the Greens and the IEU — would cease to exist.

Now, if an employee of a Greens politician publicly supported the coal seam gas industry or university decoupling, they would be fired. For the simple (and understandable) reason that these views are inconceivable with who the Greens are, what they stand for, and the expectations of those who voted them into office.

If an IEU representative openly opposed the union’s wage claim or the continuation of penalty rates for low-paid workers, they too would be shown the door for the same reason. The union’s very existence is consistent with the expectations of its members, who are often insiders.

Yet while the Greens and the IEU would reserve the right to pick and choose who will work for them, based on their beliefs and actions, they want to deny faith-based schools the same rights.

For most Australians, but not the Greens and the IEU, this issue is a red herring. It is taken for granted that organisations have a right to direct their staff to support their philosophies and beliefs. Why single out religious schools for different treatment?

Australia needs unity, not division. The Greens and IEU’s attack on faith-based schools is directed squarely at multicultural and multi-faith Australia. Why about time they realised the respect for diversity and equality that they preached.

Tony Farley is executive director of the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations.