"I am the Good Shepherd"

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me ". John 10:14

One of the most endearing images of Jesus in the Bible is that of a shepherd. One of the best known Bible passages is that of Psalm 23, ‘The Lord is my shepherd’.

I had the good fortune of observing a shepherd whilst in Israel. The man was tending his flock of sheep (and some goats) in dry, dusty conditions. He held his staff (a big thick stick) and was watchful of their every move. Towards evening the flock was placed in a pen. This pen was made from thorny branches and sticks and was woven in between trees; the only entrance and exit was through one opening. This opening however was not a gate but a space where the shepherd stayed whilst the animals were in there. Nothing would have been able to get in or out whilst he was there (besides that his staff certainly would have made a great weapon).

In observing the shepherd, his flock and his lifestyle I understood more clearly the relationship between the shepherd and his flock. He knew each and everyone of his animals, he cared for them and protected them just as Jesus does for us. The Bible verse at the start of this devotion highlights the relationship that, as a shepherd, Jesus has with us.

Many of the verses in the Bible talk about how a shepherd would give everything to protect his sheep from danger – even giving up his life; something that Jesus as our shepherd did for us when He died on the cross. The Good Shepherd – certainly an image that provides us with comfort as we are cared for and protected.

Dear Parents,

The next few weeks are certainly shaping up to be quite busy (I think they call it mad March!). There are camps, excursions, parent workshops and meetings & Sports day just to name some of the highlights. Schools are certainly very busy places with a variety of events happening throughout the week. I would imagine school is a different place now to what you experienced and the institution we know as school will keep changing. I came across a very interesting youtube clip during the last week and it has some very interesting concepts on what schooling should be (it certainly reflected some of my and the staffs’ beliefs on the role of education). Have a look at see what you think - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJj9NfTXos

Have a blessed week,

Shane

Prayer suggestions:

- We thank God for the freedom which we have to learn and play in a country such as Australia.
- We thank God for technology but ask that we use wisdom in using it correctly.
- We praise God for the care and protection he gives us as our shepherd.
- We ask God to be with the people of Christchurch as they come to term with the impact of the earthquake

Also pray for the following families:

Boesch, Bond, Bowden,
Braendler, Bratkovic, Bronsert
& Burden
Upcoming Events
There are a number of information sessions being held in the next week:

- **Mandatory Reporting**: There are two sessions next week (refer calendar). In all likelihood these will be the only sessions held for the rest of the year. These sessions will be held in the library meeting room (upstairs).
- **Reading and Writing Workshop**: This has been advertised for a number of weeks and is being held next Tuesday (1st March) evening in the library meeting room. This session begins at 7:00pm.
- **Pedal Prix Meeting**: For all families (yr. 6 and 7) that are interested in participating in this year’s Pedal Prix competition, a meeting will be held in the worship centre (church) next Wednesday evening (2nd March) beginning at 7:30pm.

Invoices / Receipts
One of the major foci in the school this year is to ‘unpack’ one of our school values, ‘we are...environmentally conscious’. All classes have discussed this and as the year unfolds I expect that many changes will be seen throughout the school. From the office we also need to improve sustainability and will work towards using less paper. One of the first ways we are going to do this is by changing the way invoices, statements and receipts are handled (these use quite a lot of paper).

- Receipts will now only be issued for cash transactions (credit card / online transactions, bank transfers etc. are all recorded through your own records). If you require a receipt you will need to inform the office.
- Invoices and statements, from the end of March, will be emailed. You are asked to supply us with your preferred email address for any school business (please complete the appropriate form). All transactions are recorded on this statement so you can track all payments.

If you wish to discuss any of these changes please contact me. Mr. Paterson

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Calendar
Please find enclosed in this newsletter the calendar for the month of March. One of the highlights for the month will be Sports Day being held on 25th March. Please note that the students are not required at school until 12:45 and need to be present until 5:30 / 6:00. It would be appreciated if you could organise your day around these times.

Car Park
There have been a few issues re the use of the church carpark. Issues have arisen with parks not being available and cars being parked around the edges. This is an unsafe practice and makes traffic movement slower and more dangerous. I would ask that you only park in spaces provided and perhaps stagger collection time if you are finding it difficult to find a park. Supervision is provided until 3:40 at which time all uncollections students wait in the office. It is interesting to note that both the carpark and kiss and drop zone are relatively clear at 3.30. As there are many users of this facility we need to ensure that we are aware of each other in this area. Thank you. Mr. Paterson

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Spotlight Board
One of the ways we display information, photos etc. in the school is by the use of our ‘Spotlight Board’ situated in the main corridor, outside the staffroom. Recently photos of the staff being involved in maths workshops have been displayed there. This board has now been updated and there are various photos of school leaders on there. One regular feature will be a profile on a staff member which will change every week. The students in Mrs. Geering’s class have interviewed every staff member and have prepared these profiles. The first profile is on Mr. Paterson (did you know his favourite team is the Brisbane Lions?).

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Canteen Helpers 2011
Term 1 Week 5

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<th>Monday: 28th February</th>
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<td>Denise Kane</td>
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<th>Wednesday: 2nd March</th>
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<td>Michelle Williams</td>
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Koorong Kids
Koorong Kids orders are due this week. Please hand them into the office by Friday so that I can process the order.

Premier’s Reading Challenge
The school will again be taking part in the Premier’s Reading Challenge. This is a programme designed to encourage Reception to Year 9 students to read for pleasure by reading 12 books at their level by September the 9th this year. Students receive medals or certificates according to the number of years they have participated. More information will be given through class Newsletters and we hope that we can have full school participation this year. 290 students at St Michael’s completed the challenge in 2010 with 19 students earning the “Hall of Fame” Medal for participating for 7 years. This year those students are eligible for the Hall of Fame Reader for Life award and will receive a gold embossed certificate for completing the Challenge eight times! Students in Reception to Year 2 will read and record their books as a whole class. They will also be encouraged to borrow Library books with a ‘green dot’ which are recognised as good literature at their level. Students in Year 3 to 7 will receive a PRC Form to record 8 book titles from the Reading Challenge list and 4 titles at their appropriate level. The PRC books for Years 3 - 5 have a silver dot and the Year 6 and 7 titles have yellow dot. Parents and teachers are able to sign the PRC Record form as children complete each title. So... stay tune for more information and happy reading!!!! Mrs Zadow

Curriculum Matters
Each term I have the happy task of reviewing the teachers’ planning folders. In the folders are the planning documents prepared for the coming year. They include a planning team essential agreement, a yearly overview, planners for each unit of inquiry, a sample of the weekly timetable for the class, a mud-map of the term that indicates when things will start and finish, and stand-alone planners for curriculum areas that are not being integrated into the unit of inquiry. It is a lot of work for the teachers, but they appreciate the benefits of being well organised and having everything documented. This year I also asked them to decide upon a few professional goals for the year.

One teacher wrote the following:

My goals for 2011 are:
- to model to students a relationship with God; to give as many students as possible an encounter with Christ Jesus, encouraging and equipping them to serve Him and his mission wholeheartedly
- to become competent in the use of the PYP curriculum framework, the school policies and to develop in my understanding of Lutheran theology
- to contribute positively to the St Michael’s community through devotions and my general interactions.

This is the sort of balanced view that our teachers bring to their work. They recognise the need to be competent practitioners and work within the guidelines the school sets. We also have a cohesive and collegial staff that enjoys working together. What makes both of these possible is that we put Christ at the centre of our learning community by trying to live for Him every day. In many of the teachers’ goal statements was the desire to bring their faith into the classroom, and the staffroom, and make a positive contribution to the lives of those with whom they interact.

John Dow
PYP Coordinator
From the Reception N Class
(Mrs Norman)

We have had some very exciting first few weeks at school. The children have met many new people and enjoyed many new activities. They love going to specialist lessons and seeing their Year 6/7 class buddies each week. As there are so many things to share with their families we have a class Wiki that the children and parents can look at and see videos and photos and information about what we do at school.

From the Community Carer
Tegan Howard

Lessons I Learned From my Parents
#2: Talk It Out

In my childhood home we had 2 lounge rooms. One was affectionately known as the “Naughty Room”. There was even a sign above the door that my brother had made at school saying Naughty Room. I remember spending lots of time in the Naughty Room having “chats” with my parents. Now before you all go thinking that I was a really naughty child, the Naughty Room wasn’t only for when someone misbehaved. We would talk about everything in the Naughty Room, concerns I had about school, life questions, boys, friendship issues, I think I even learnt about the birds and the bees in the Naughty Room. I learnt quite young the value of making time to “talk it out”. Nothing was ever too big or too small to take to the Naughty Room. If my brother and I were caught fighting, we would be sat down and told to talk it out. “Let’s talk about it” were words often heard in our household. I quickly learnt how to communicate my thoughts and feelings in what I knew was a safe and loving environment. I always knew that I would be heard, and not judged.

With email, mobile phones, IM, facebook, twitter, all at our fingertips, it has never been easier to communicate with each other. But the convenience of a text message will never compare to the face-to-face, heart-to-heart talks between a parent and child. Mealtimes provide a great opportunity for the family to communicate about the day or week. Questions such as “What was the best/worst part of your day? Why?” are great to get the conversation flowing freely. Encourage your children to share their celebrations, fears, concerns and questions with the family. You will all benefit from making the time to Talk It Out.

Family Challenge for the week: Learn something new about each member of your family. Encourage everyone to share something with the family that they never have before.

Struggling to fit in Family Time? See this website for ideas: familieswithpurpose.com/howtofitfamilytime.html