Dear Parents,

**Lent - The Great Baptismal Retreat**

In the early Church, Lent was as demanding as Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting; one meal a day, toward evening, with flesh meat, fish and dairy products forbidden. In the second millennium, practices softened gradually, but the penitential spirit remained.

What the Church is emphasising today is conversion, a more wholehearted turning to Christ. The spirit of ‘self-offering’ - not just ‘offering up’ - is integral to conversion, provided we are clear on the why of our small deprivations and services to others; to join in the great offering of Christ for the world.

From its start, Lent was associated with baptism. It was taken as preparatory to Easter, the baptismal feast. The forty days are a great baptismal retreat. The Church as a whole is bid in these days to relive the full mystery of redemption. Every mode of purifying the heart and turning toward the Lord in prayer is of value to us seeking renewal of our spiritual youth. Always gaze ahead to the paschal mystery, the death and resurrection of Christ.

(by James S. Torrens SJ)

Each year, to mark the season of Lent our school gets involved with Project Compassion and looks to raise much needed funds for those that are less fortunate than ourselves. This year we are placing a real emphasis on the spirit of ‘self-offering’ with each of the classes challenged to come up with a small project. Some of the ideas being discussed at the moment include a cupcake day and growing vegetables (to sell) in the school veggie patch. I look forward to more great ideas coming from the classes.

**Opening School Mass & Blessing of the Refurbishments.**

To celebrate the beginning of the 2013 school year and to formally induct our new school leaders we will be having our opening school mass next Wednesday Feb 19th at 9:30am. Following this, Fr Jim will formally bless and open our refurbished communal hub and toilet block (thanks to the QGC Sustainable Communities Fund). It would be great to have as many parents as possible join with us for this celebration.

**District Swimming Carnival**

I wish all of our swimmers competing in this Friday’s District Swimming Carnival the very best of luck. I am sure that you will all give your best and show that Joey’s spirit and teamwork.

God Bless,

Aaron Wells

**Help Needed!** At the end of last year we were able to purchase a considerable number of reading resources to bulk up our school reading schemes. In order to get these out into the classrooms we are in need of parents to help with covering. If you are able to help out please see Mrs Bowman in the Library.
Ash Wednesday 2013

Today, Ash Wednesday, marks the beginning of the season of Lent and also marks the beginning of the annual Caritas Australia Project Compassion appeal. Donations to Project Compassion allow Caritas Australia, the Catholic Agency for International Aid and Development, to work with local communities around the world to alleviate poverty, hunger, oppression and injustice.

This year each of the classes has been working to think of their own individual, “Projects for Compassion” as a way they can give something of themselves in an effort to raise money for those in need. In the coming weeks and continuing right through the season of Lent, students will be participating in and co-ordinating their own individual and class Projects for Compassion. We are dedicated to ensuring that students use their own strengths and talents and give of their time and efforts to raise this much needed money.

At the APRE Cluster day I attended in Toowoomba on Monday, the group was fortunate enough to have a visit by one of the many sisters working for Caritas Australia. During her visit, we were told the story of the work that she is a part of thanks to donations by the Project Compassion Appeal.

She spoke of the Safe Motherhood Program that has been established in rural Bangladesh which has assisted in reducing maternal and infant mortality. Through the training of midwives in both antenatal and postnatal treatment, Caritas has been making huge changes to the quality of life of these women. Currently in Bangladesh, 48 women die every day due to childbirth. On top of this, hundreds more women are abandoned and ostracised daily as a result of poor health and hygiene post childbirth. Caritas has trained over 800 midwives to assist in many of these rural areas and since beginning their program, the midwives are yet to lose a patient. Caritas Australia is also responsible for educating these communities on safe and healthy practices both during and after pregnancy.

Whilst the work that Caritas Australia has produced is wonderful they have a very realistic view of just how far they have to go. In a country with over 150 million people there are many communities yet to be reached and many women and children suffering each and every day.

This story of the Safe Motherhood Program in Bangladesh is one of the many wonderful and inspirational stories of service and compassion that have been a result of the work of Caritas Australia. If we think of our lives and the little that we can give up as a donation to these appeals during this Lenten season, it is not hard to weigh up the costs when we hear stories of such adversity. This season, I urge you to think of these women, to think of the millions that are yet to receive help and to think of the amazing impact your donation can make. Rather than scavenging for change in the bottom of a bag or behind the couch, think of what you would be happy to go without to help causes such as these and many others all over the world. This year I pose the question, what will be your project for compassion? How can we follow the example of Jesus and his compassion for the poor?

God Bless
Katie Hede
APRE
**Parent Liaison**

Each year we have the pleasure of welcoming many new families into the St Joey’s and Chinchilla Community. Moving to a new town and school can be quite a daunting experience, coming to terms with the who, when, what, where and why of how things happen in Chinchilla. In order to aide families in this process, Mrs. Sally Crothers, one of our parents and school board members has offered to act as a parent liaison officer. Sally will be available as a point of contact for parents who wish to ask general questions pertaining to the school or the Chinchilla community. So if you are unsure of something or need some advice, feel free to give

**Parent/Teacher Information Sessions**

Coming up in week 4 our teachers will be holding their annual parent information sessions. These sessions are a great opportunity to formally meet your child’s teacher and to get an overview of what your child will experience throughout the year. All parents are encouraged to attend these sessions to ensure clarity and understanding of their child’s program.

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**From the Sporting Field...with Mrs Andrea Hart**

**DISTRICT SWIMMING**

Good luck to the 28 St Joey’s students who qualified for the Chinchilla & District team. These students will compete this Friday, 15th February and if successful will go on to compete at the Regional Swimming Trials in Miles on Friday 1st March. Thank you to those parents who have offered assistance in timekeeping on the day. Students will be required to wear their sports uniform & meet at the pool by 8.45am.

**REGIONAL BASKETBALL**

Congratulations to Arlie Sommerfeld, Willow Lawton and Jack Olm who were successful in the District Basketball Trials on Friday. These students will now go on to compete in the Regional Trials in Roma on the 27th February.

**Workers of the Week**

- Prep: Toby Allen, Riley Bender
- Yr 1: Jorja Keating
- Yr 2: Brock Johnston
- Yr 3: Nicholas Donnelly
- Yr 4: Jake Johnson
- Yr 5: Jamiee Walsh
- Yr 6: Coby Calleja
- Yr 7: Ronac Tom, Penny Crothers

**Tuckshop**

The Tuckshop will not be operating until further notice.

**UNIFORMS**

The uniform shop will be open Wed Morning from 8.20 - 9:20am and Thurs afternoon from 2.30-3.00pm

Uniform co-ordinators are:
- Ann Welke Ph: 4668 9580 Mob: 0409 643 758
- Cathy McLatchey Ph: 4669 1904 Mob: 0404 013 218

**Melon Festival**

The Chinchilla Junior Bulldogs are putting in a float this year. Any interested kids are to meet at Q-Link near the Club Hotel at 9:30am on the Saturday morning wearing their football socks, shorts & joggers. Kids will be given a jersey to wear on arrival. The older juniors will walk and the
Local, grass fed beef, pork & lamb
Private kill specialists
Oven ready, prepared meals
Ham & bacon prepared on premises
Frozen fish & seafood products
6 Inveria Road Chinchilla
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Fax: 07 4668 9735

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