Dear Parents/Guardians, Friends and Benefactors,

We, at St Philomena School, are very much back into the swing of things after a very busy start to the new school year. The initial rush caused by integrating secondary education into the school has passed and things have settled down to a much calmer pace. In order to provide secondary education we have welcomed to the school two new teachers, Mr Robert Vida and Miss Jaime Boniface. We also welcome into the primary school Mrs Hayley Hardy teaching the Grade 2/3 class. While we are very pleased to have on board these new teachers, we must also remember the difficult challenges to be faced by one of our staff, Mr John Calnan, together with his wife, this year. Mr Calnan’s wife was diagnosed with leukaemia just before Christmas and our heartfelt prayers are with them as they work through this illness.

In the secondary school our two new teachers are sharing a demanding load with great enthusiasm and dedication. Mr Vida is teaching Maths, Science, Geography, ICT and HPE and Miss Boniface is teaching English, History, French, Art and ICT. Fr Anderson is taking the Religion classes for the secondary school and I am teaching the Latin.

The annual general meeting was held two weeks ago and during the meeting the new Parents and Friends Committee was chosen. Our new President is Michael Walmsley, our new Secretary David Walmsley, and our new Treasurer Peter Massey. I am confident that this new team will do a wonderful job for the school and I thank them for accepting these added responsibilities in their already busy lives. I would also like to thank the outgoing members from last year’s committee for the work they accomplished in 2011. Last year’s members were Alex Langguth as President, Luke Fox as Secretary, and Shane Coles as Treasurer. Thank you to all of them for sacrificing their time to help the school in 2011.

Let me finish this letter by promoting our Lenten collection for 2012. This year, during Lent, the students are asked to donate money for the Indian mission of the Society of St Pius X which, among other things, runs an orphanage for boys and an orphanage for girls. The children are encouraged to give of their own money, money they have earned in some way such as doing extra jobs around the home. They are, of course, not expected to give something every day but a collection will be taken each day in Lent. It was very edifying to see the generosity of the children last year and I look forward to seeing that generous spirit in action again this year.

Thank you for all the support, material and spiritual, last year and I assure you that all friends and benefactors are remembered in our weekly school Mass.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Fr Karl Pepping
Principal of St Philomena School
Little Acts of Kindness

During Lent we are giving alms for the little girls and boys who live at the orphanage in India. We are doing jobs for our mums and dads at home to earn our alms. Jesus said 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew, 25:40) Prep student Gemma and Grade One student Gabrielle are happily putting Jesus' words into practice. School captains William and Holly bring the collection box to our class each day.

Good goods in small parcels!

During Lent we are learning about God's great and special love for us. We love Him and we are making lots of sacrifices to show our love for Him. In Prep and Grade One we try to do 'small things with great love'. Can you count beans in our jar? They are our sacrifices and good deeds. Let's see how many we can do for Holy God. Our bean jar is filling up!

Classroom Visitor: This little Green Tree Snake has been doing the rounds of our school over the last few weeks. This photo was taken of it climbing through the art drying racks in the Secondary Girls' Classroom. Green Tree Snakes are very common in our area and are non-venomous.
Yummy Pancakes

On Shrove Tuesday we made pancakes. Miss Duffley and Mrs de Groot helped us. We helped to mix the pancakes, flip the pancakes and EAT the pancakes! We used lots of different toppings. They tasted really good!

Secondary School Excursion - Cable Wakeboarding!

Friday, 17th February 2012, was one of the most exciting days of my life. We went cable wakeboarding.

We left at 10:00am (after some embarrassing photos). We went by private transport to the venue, although someone, no names mentioned, gives horrible directions over the phone! I would like to thank Mrs Massey, Mrs de Groot and Miss Boniface for their help with the transport.

When we arrived at the venue, we watched a safety video and then, after a long wait, we finally got to grab our boards and run. Jessica Heufel went first, and she was very brave to do so. Miss Boniface surprised everyone with her talent for getting past the last corner, while some of us couldn’t get past the starting line, even after a few goes. I personally had a great time watching certain animals fly onto my board while I was moving.

After two hours of fun, laughter and definitely some embarrassing moments, we sat down and had a delicious meal of fish and chips, while talking about our adventures of the day.

That Friday was one of the best days of my life and, although many of us came home aching all over and smelling like fish, I will remember that day for the rest of my life. I know everyone else will too.

Saona Bailey

**The Secondary Boys also went Cable Wakeboarding - The boys went on Wednesday 15th February and had a sausage sizzle for lunch. They were accompanied by Father Pepping and Mr Vida and kindly transported by Mrs Hardess.**

Father Pepping will be on retreat from the evening of Sunday, March 4 until the evening of Saturday, March 11 and therefore absent from the school.

Mr Paul Briggs will be Acting Principal during this time.