

Principal's Report

AGM 2023

Good evening, and thank you for attending St Jerome's AGM for 2023

I acknowledge the traditional landowners, the Whadjuk Noongar peoples, the land on which we meet, and I pay my respect to elders, past present and emerging.

A special welcome to ...

- Fr Vijay, Parish Priest, -The Parish of St Jerome's
- Melanie Freeman, Chair of St Jerome's School Advisory Council.
- Stephanie McLernon, President of the P&F Association. (*Absent tonight*)
- Assistant Principals -Vanessa Alaniz and Susannah Robinson
- Advocates – Tess Lornie, Christine Celenza, Peta Nicolaou, Sarah Wohlsein, Manuela Benino, and Carmel Searle
- The Staff of St Jerome's.
- Parents and Caregivers.

Your presence tonight holds great significance, and I truly appreciate your generosity in being here. Our shared commitment to this school is evident, and your attendance underscores its importance to each one of us.

The partnership we hold as parents and teachers in guiding the education of our young minds is a harmonious one, grounded in a sacred trust. We must never forget our collective responsibility towards the care and development of every child at St Jerome's.

A warm and welcoming atmosphere should characterize our school—a place where the joy of learning fills the air, and students are empowered to reach their personal best. The centrality of Jesus in our endeavours should be a cause for celebration, with prayer resonating in our classrooms and discussions about God flowing freely.

Our education assistants and teachers should embody active learning, finding joy in the learning process and eagerly anticipating each workday. Their influence on the future is profound, as they leave an indelible mark on the children here, building upon the foundation laid by parents.

I am firm in my belief, that the ideals I've just mentioned are not merely spoken about at St Jerome's but are lived out on a daily basis.

Let's begin our discussion about the 2023 School Year.

The Arts - Performing Arts

Arts and creativity thrive at St Jerome's, evident in the rich talents of our students. Our **Festival of the Arts** was a tremendous success this year as we collaborated with other WA Catholic schools in the community. Many entries in the festival garnered significant praise and accolades. Notably, three solo performers from our Instrumental program stood out, with two of them receiving special inscribed awards for their 'Outstanding' Performances.

The Choral Speech students from Year 4/5G and 3B captivated the audience with their engaging performances, both earning Merit awards. Year 2 Green also impressed the adjudicators with their expressive and entertaining drama performance, 'Little Red Riding Gretel.'

Other notable highlights of 2023 were.....

The St Jerome's Dance Troupe ventured into the nationwide **Wakakirri** competition, with their amazing performance emphasizing the values of the heart and mind. They received a highly commended rating for their Wakakirri entry and a Merit at the Spirit of the Arts Festival.

St Jerome's hosted their very first Junior Primary Showcase Extravaganza, featuring students from PP-2 which delighted parents and family members giving them a glimpse into the Junior Primary Arts Program. Year 3-6 students wowed the audience with their dance moves during the 3-6 Dance Spectacular.

Our instrumental program was thriving, offering individual instrumental and vocal lessons, and the opportunity for some of their students to represent the school at the PA festival.

The Arts - Visual Arts

Visual Arts saw yet another busy, productive, and prosperous year in 2023. Buzzing with energy, students have continued to demonstrate their creativity by producing personalised artworks through teacher demonstrations and self-experimentation. Students continued their ongoing understanding of art and artists from the past and present. It has been wonderful to hear students use artistic vocabulary more easily when responding to artworks from various art movements during our Responding to Art lessons.

Term Three saw our Visual Arts Program from Semester One enable students to produce an outstanding arrangement of creative pieces for our annual Visual Arts Exhibition in the Barry Whitely Hall. This provided our school and the wider community the opportunity to view the exceptional showcase of our students' artwork from Pre-Primary to Year Six. Special thanks to the Cockburn Community Cultural Council for supplying the pin up boards that enabled this to happen. School funding provided much needed cabinets for Visual Arts which were installed outside the Art Studio in July. These cabinets house consumable and non-consumable materials for art projects and will be beneficial for storing artwork for exhibitions.

The Angelico Art Exhibition saw five outstanding entries from Year One to Year Six from St Jerome's Primary School. Their work was proudly showed in the foyer at Forrest Centre building in Perth as part of the Spirit of the Arts Festival for three weeks in August.

A third opportunity arose for our students to showcase their talents as St Jerome's was invited to display thirty-five pieces of artwork, both two and three dimensional, at the School of Education at UNDA. For almost two Terms, our students' artwork will be displayed at the University until the end of November for their students to view, discuss and understand the visual art programmes being conducted in primary schools. This display of artwork is also open for anyone to view.

Our school digital sign on Rockingham Road is also being used to post artwork allowing anyone who passes by to our amazing artists at work and what they have created. This will continue over the summer holidays into the new year. In addition to this, with

parental permission, artwork from St Jerome's Primary School is in the process of being displayed in community venues, such as local cafes.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you goes to our P&F for providing funding for various art equipment which has supported and extended the Visual Arts Programme. In addition, various storage containers were acquired making materials and equipment so much easier to manage and access.

Wellbeing

Our school is committed to fostering the overall well-being of our students through a variety of initiatives. One of our primary focuses is on enhancing students' emotional and social development. We have continued with small group work sessions aimed at boosting self-esteem and helping children manage their big emotions. These sessions provide a safe space for students to express their feelings and learn valuable skills for emotional regulation. Our new psychologist, Robyn Cantatore, has also facilitated these sessions, offering expert guidance and support to our students.

Continuing our commitment to emotional well-being, we are proud to sustain the **Rainbows** grief program, which has been an essential resource for our students dealing with loss and grief. The program offers a structured and supportive environment for students to process their emotions and build resilience. Additionally, in-class support is available to provide students with guidance and assistance when needed. As a new development, we are excited to announce the implementation of the **Fathering Project**, aimed at strengthening the bond between fathers and their children. The Parent TV, supported by the P&F, has also been instrumental in providing additional resources and information to parents, addressing various parenting topics. Pre-Primary Green has been piloting the **Kimochi** program, with plans to fully implement it in 2024 for our junior primary school, further emphasizing the importance of emotional literacy. Our leadership team has invested significant time and effort in aligning our well-being initiatives with the CEWA well-being framework. One of the crucial factors identified during this process was the growing need for a school counsellor, leading to the appointment of Michael Ferguson, who will play a vital role in providing additional support to our students. These initiatives collectively reflect our unwavering commitment to the emotional and mental well-being of our school community.

Tonight, I have news that Peta Nicolaou has accepted a new position at John Bosco College as student support coordinator. This is a new position being created at the College in 2024.

Peta is leaving St Jerome's after 16 dedicated and faithful years of service to our school community. Peta is a much loved and respected staff member, and in later years a significant leader amongst our school community. Peta started with us as a maternity leave replacement teacher in Year 7, yes when Yr 7 was still a primary year level. Since then, Peta, has held many year level positions, a cluster leader and finally a foundation Advocate for Wellbeing at St Jerome's.

Peta is going to be missed by so many of us, and it will be unusual to not see her around the place in 2024. Our sad loss will be a significant gain for the school community at John Bosco College.

From all of us at St Jerome's, Peta, congratulations on your new appointment at JBC. All our blessings and good wishes reach out to you with thanks.

Physical Education

Physical Education is taught as a specialist subject to all students in pre-primary – year 6. Our pre-primary and year 1 students focused on developing their fundamental movement skills with Sarah Connolly in Semester 1, and then with Cassandra Pirozzi in Semester 2. The year 2s and 3s work to applying these skills to modified games, while developing their interpersonal skills and learning to work as a team. Our upper primary students then continued to develop all the skills they have acquired in their foundation years to be able to play a variety of sports.

Carnivals

Students in years 4-6 participated in our annual Swimming Carnival at Fremantle Aquatic Centre. It was wonderful to finally be able to return to our usual format without any COVID restrictions. All students in pre-primary to year 6 participated in our cross-country carnival in Term 2. The students run various distances along a course set up around the school. Finally, we had our Athletics carnival in term 4. In previous years the carnival has been held in Term 3; however, moving it meant we could participate without the threat of rain or swooping magpies! So many family

members showed up to support our students and create a great atmosphere at all our events.

St Jerome's is a member of the Catholic Primary Schools Sporting Association (CPSSA). We compete in several carnivals throughout the year including swimming, cross-country and athletics. Across all three of these events, several of our students enjoyed individual success, winning championship medallions. This year we were awarded the APPS shield at Athletics for accruing the most points per student enrolled in years 3-6.

The CPSSA also holds seven team sport competitions each year. The Lightning Carnival in Term 2 allows all students in year 6 to have the opportunity to represent St Jerome's in either football, netball, soccer, or volleyball. Our soccer teams performed particularly well with the B-division team winning their competition and the A-division team just missing out after a tense penalty shoot-out. We also competed in cricket, basketball, and league tag rugby. Several of our teams from these competitions made it into the finals or top 2 positions. The highlight being our girls' basketball team winning the shield in a thrilling one-point grand final victory, thanks to their incredible teamwork.

Participation in all these events allows students to develop the capacity to work with different people, build resilience, make new friends and hopefully discover an activity they feel confident to participate in well into high-school or even as adults. Thank you to all staff and parents who supported our children in either coaching or officiating roles at all school based and interschool events. Your contribution is highly valued and allows these opportunities for our children to enjoy sport.

Swimming Lessons

Our Pre-primary, Year 1 and Year 2 students completed a 10-day program at Booragoon Leisure Fit, in Term 2. The years 3-6's were at Fremantle Leisure Centre in Term 4. 2022 was our second year participating in lessons and the whole school attended with ease now that we all knew what to expect! For some children, lessons at school are their only opportunity to learn how to swim which is a valuable life skill. Lessons are again booked for 2024.

Grants

We received a grant from Sporting Schools which was used to have basketball coaches from the Cockburn Cougars deliver sessions to children in years 2-6, as well replenish our basketball equipment. The P&F kindly participated in a fundraising program that exchanged recycled bread bags for some new equipment for children to play with at recess and lunch. They have also approved the purchase of two new St Jerome's marquee tents that can be used at interschool and school-based events. Thank you to the P&F for supporting Physical Education and sport at St Jerome's.

Tonight, I have news that Taryn Kalat has accepted a 12-month PE position at Santa Maria College, beginning January 2024.

Taryn has been at St Jerome's since 2010, a total of 13 years of committed and dedicated service to our school community. Taryn, is a secondary PE specialist; however, it was the joy of teaching primary school, even Kindy PE, which turned her interest our way.

This secondary position at Santa Maria also resonates closely with Taryn's passion for girls and women in sport and building their confidence to be active.

It is going to be so different not having Taryn manage everything PE and Sport at St Jerome's. Her skills and discipline in making everything work and work so well will be missed by all of us.

Taryn, our sincere congratulations on your appointment for 2024. Santa Maria have gained an amazing PE teacher.

Religious Education

Our Faith Advocate, Tess Lornie, has worked closely with Leadership, colleagues, students, and the Priests and Parish of St Jerome's to foster connections to Jesus Christ. The emphasis has been on knowing Jesus, and how He came from a place of compassion in all His interactions with people. The overarching message; Do What Jesus Did! - be *kindness* and *care* for one another.

Close collaboration with Mrs Susannah Robinson APRE has occurred to meet the spiritual needs of our school community. Teachers have been assisted in preparing students to participate in Sacraments. All year levels from 3-6 have led a year level Mass each Term and regularly celebrated the sacrament of Reconciliation. PP-Yr 2 Students have had practical help in facilitating their Liturgies,

and Kindy teachers have had regular visits throughout the year to offer support or encouragement as they continued their amazing work of bringing Jesus to the youngest members of St Jerome's.

Communication between school and Parish, thanks to Father Vijay and Father Navis, has been effortless. House Masses, Grandparents' Day Mass and Devotions for Mary have been solemn and touching celebrations.

The Faith Advocate has addressed whole school gatherings, lead staff in prayer and made classroom visits which has allowed for positive, uplifting exchanges. Throughout the year students have been given opportunities to connect with Jesus through Bible stories, spontaneous prayer and Christian meditation.

Maths

At the start of the year, we had the privilege of hosting a group of teachers from St Joseph's who came to observe the implementation of **Maths Talks and The LES (Launch, Explore, Summarise)** approach in Miss Correia and Miss Spencer's classrooms. The students not only demonstrated higher-order thinking strategies but also showcased efficient mental computation skills and strong teamwork, all while remaining highly engaged in their learning.

Another highlight was the **World of Maths** incursion that took place in our Parish Hall. For two days, our PP to Year Six students participated in interactive, hands-on math problems that engaged all their senses. The activities involved listening, watching, reading, speaking, and manipulating ideas. The event catered to diverse learning abilities, using real-life examples. The students enjoyed the challenges so much that we are delighted to announce that World of Maths will be returning to St Jerome's in 2024.

Our P&F generously donated over \$1200 worth of **Origo Big Books** to our Kindergarten through Year 2 classes. These books leverage children's love for learning and stories to introduce key mathematical concepts, reinforcing mathematical language and understanding. We express our gratitude to the P&F for their support.

In Term 3, we had pre-service teachers from Notre Dame specialising in Mathematics conduct Maths Assessment Interviews with our Year One students. Based on the data gathered, they created and implemented three lessons spanning three weeks in Term Four, tailored to the needs of specific small groups of children. The Year One students thoroughly enjoyed the games and tasks created by these pre-service teachers.

Additionally, in Term Four, St Jerome's hosted the **Numero Competition**, Coastal Heat. Mrs Brierley dedicated significant time to coaching our teams, and their results are a testament to her hard work. We had 18 teams competing from various Catholic, Independent, and Government schools. In the preliminary rounds, our school finished third and fifth, and in the final round, we secured the second place by just one point. Stewards volunteered their time to assist on the day, and our team's demonstrated determination, persistence, teamwork, and courage. We eagerly anticipate expanding our Numero mathletes next year.

This Term also saw a selection of students participating in a unique '**behind the screen**' lesson at the Newman Siena Centre. These students demonstrated their problem-solving skills in front of teachers, assistant principals, and consultants from CEWA. The children used liquid chalk to write on two-way glass, a memorable experience for them. They represented our school with pride and made their EMU teacher very proud indeed.

In summary, this year has been a resounding success for our Mathematics department at St Jerome's. We have big plans for 2024 and are excited to continue nurturing a love for mathematics in our students.

Early Years Focus

Throughout this year, our Early Childhood Learning Area has experienced a flurry of activity due to the construction in our Pre Kindy, Kindy, Pre-Primary, and Year 1 spaces. These alterations are set to elevate our learning programs and environments, cultivating St Jerome's as a hub for playful, investigative, and inquiry-based education. A heartfelt appreciation goes out to all the staff, parents, and children for your unwavering understanding and support throughout this bustling period.

The ongoing implementation of the InitialLit program has resulted in noticeable improvements in children's progress and accomplishments. Additionally, this year introduced the PreLit program in Kindy, along with the incorporation of a support program, Minilit Sage, designed to aid children requiring extra assistance in enhancing their literacy skills.

The Triple C Program (Creating Change in Children) continued with an increased number of volunteers engaging with children in the Early Years Classrooms. We hope to welcome even more volunteers next year to collaborate with our students.

Our ECE staff participated in various professional development opportunities focusing on the significance of play and optimal methods for executing a well-rounded curriculum for the children. The insights, guest speakers, and breakout sessions proved to be invaluable for our individual growth and development. The Early Years Framework underwent noteworthy revisions that required our staff to initiate and align with our school's principles regarding play, sustainability, wellbeing and indigenous perspectives.

NAPLAN & BRLA

NAPLAN and BRLA results show that our school's academic results have remained consistent with those of the previous year. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff and students. Our commitment to continuous improvement drives us to delve further, identifying areas of strength and need across the school. Our students continue to show commendable gains in numeracy, and we thank our classroom teachers and EMU team - Georgie and Asri - for considering the most effective teaching methodology, especially in the early years, setting the strong foundations for mathematical understanding. Areas identified as needing further development have seen us include targeted programs in literacy where additional support and resources can make a significant impact on student's learning experiences through the school. Our teachers and EAs are working collaboratively to implement targeted strategies and interventions that will benefit all students and ensure their continued academic success.

Digital Learning at St Jerome's in 2022

Digital Literacy has continued to form a significant part of the curriculum and I am pleased to report that it has continued to grow throughout 2023. A significant

milestone was the accreditation of Tasha Hartley, Chloe Kramer and Manuela Benino as Apple Learning Coaches. This professional training empowered us to create action plans, enhancing staff members' skills to creatively and effectively use multimedia resources for teaching and learning and will be an ongoing journey.

Excitingly, Katelyn Correia will join as an Apple Coache in 2024, contributing to our goal of elevating expertise in digital technology integration across the curriculum. In addition to our Apple initiatives, we introduced 'Tech Club' on Thursdays after school, which has been positively received by students and parents. The ongoing support from the P&F, particularly their contributions enabling the purchase of Lego Spike, Prime kits, and Ozobots, continues to create an enriched digital learning environment for the students at St Jerome's and we are extremely appreciative of their support.

In addition to our work with Apple, we have also focused on developing strategies for using technology wisely. This was highlighted by the Digital Wellbeing Town Hall, presented in conjunction with Peta Nicolaou, where parents had enriched discussions about strategies to manage their child's technology use at home.

Collaborating with the CyberSafety Project, we hosted incursions for students, provided professional development to staff, and conducted webinars for parents, aiming to empower our community to proactively manage digital safety through education and our collaboration with the CyberSafety Project will continue in 2024 with a focus on Digital Wellbeing.

Looking ahead to 2024, our plans include St Jerome's hosting an iPad conference for students with an opportunity to innovate, problem solve, critically create and share knowledge amongst a network of neighbouring schools.

Learning Diversity

At St Jerome's Learning Diversity is a priority! We whole heartedly adopt an inclusive approach. Through collaboration with the school's leadership team, teachers, our school psychologist, therapist and parents, students are supported to help achieve their goals on their Individual Educational Plan. (IEP)

Students' interests, strengths and learning needs on a spiritual, educational, social and physical level are catered for through various opportunities to engage in initiatives and

experiences. The students are supported through these experiences by 7 highly trained and dynamic EAs who are coordinated by a Learning Diversity Advocate. All of whom work shoulder to shoulder with classroom teachers to support students with diverse learning needs.

This year our students have enjoyed participating in social skills activities offered in regular cooking sessions on a Thursday and through social skills sessions using the **Kimochi emotion pillows** and we have just started introducing the characters to help teach recognising emotions and how to regulate them.

The Learning Diversity room is a wonderful sensory space for students to learn, socialise and play. It is also a space where therapist come to work in or to share in our equipment to help support our students.

We have been fortunate enough this year to have had the LD room revamped at the beginning of the year with new vinyl flooring. Cupboards were removed and walls were painted creating a greater sense of space in the room. A screen was built outside the LD room extending our space allowing for water play, painting, and other sensory activities. Additional tables were purchased with flexible seating to cater for the wide age range of our students. The trampoline has been a great hit. Allowing our students an opportunity to regulate, engage and further practise their social skills by learning to take turns. Our OT therapists have enjoyed it too!

Over the course of this year we have continued to add further resources to the learning diversity room to help create a child centred space, offering students flexibility to choose and engage in activities at their level.

Extension Program

In 2023, St Jerome's has offered an Extension program to our gifted and talented students in Years 2-6. We have entered our students into numerous external competitions and activities, which include:

- **The Cluedunnit Kids Competition**, facilitated by the University of Western Australia
- **The Da Vinci Decathlon** – both a Year 5 and 6 team participated in this higher order thinking event.
- **The BEBRAS Computational Thinking Challenge** – open to Year 5/6. We had a student receive a High Distinction and 4 students with Distinctions over two rounds.

- **Night of the Notables** – 13 students celebrated an evening of “Inventors and their Inventions “
- **Australian Maths Challenge** – Year 4 and 6 children involved.
- **Craig Silvey Writing Competition** – 11 entries.
- **Write a Book in a Day** – a Year 5 and Year 6 team were both involved. Our Year 6 team were awarded a “Highly Commended” in the Western Australian Primary School Division.
- **Prime Minister’s Spelling Bee (online)** 2 students made the State Finals.
- **APSMO Maths Olympiad, Games and Explorer Competition**
- **Interschool Spelling Bee** – 9 students represented St Jerome’s. We had a Year 4 student place first, and a Year 4 and 5 student place second.
- **Purchase of Lego Spike Prime Kits** – which was then incorporated into Semester 2 Digital Technology lessons for Year 3-6

The P&F Association

We acknowledge the P&F Association for their tireless efforts in fostering a sense of community. Beyond fundraising, they have played a vital role in creating opportunities for families to connect and build meaningful relationships. Their focus on community-building goes beyond mere financial support; it reflects a commitment to the holistic well-being of our school community.

The considerable funds raised by this dedicated team of parents have greatly benefited our school, enriching the educational experience for our students. We express our sincere appreciation to every member of the P&F for their outstanding efforts. Your hard work has not gone unnoticed, and we are truly grateful for the positive impact you have made on our school community.

We extend special thanks to **President Steph McLernon, Treasurer Mark Watson, Secretary Kerry Fryers, and SAC Rep Zoe Mailer** for their exemplary leadership and dedication throughout the past year. These individuals serve as remarkable examples of what it means to be actively engaged in their children's school.

Tonight, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mark Watson, the departing treasurer of St Jerome's P&F Association, as he concludes his tenure this year. Mark's dedicated

service has significantly contributed to the success of our association, and his commitment is truly commendable.

On behalf of everyone at St Jerome's, we offer our sincerest thanks to Stephanie, Mark and Kerry, and the entire P&F team for their generosity, hard work, and unwavering commitment. Your contributions have made a lasting impact, and we are grateful for the positive influence you have had on our school community.

The School Advisory Council (SAC)

The journey of witnessing the construction of Stage 11 at St. Jerome's has been an exhilarating experience for the School Advisory Council. The anticipation was well worth it, and the realization of our planning is now evident. The refurbishment of six classrooms, the introduction of new toilet facilities for Pre Primary and Year 1 students, a fresh play area in front of the Year 1 classrooms, a fixed roof enclosure for Kindergarten classes, and a redesigned nature play area—all signify the tangible fruits of our collective efforts. We eagerly look forward to seeing our youngest students revel in their new spaces come 2024.

A heartfelt thank you extends to every member of the School Advisory Council. Our shared evenings have been marked by camaraderie, good humor, and a shared sense of purpose. In our meetings, we continually seek ways to nurture and expand this community, providing first-class facilities for every child's enjoyment.

A special expression of gratitude goes to Mel Freeman, our Council Chairperson, who concludes her tenure tonight. Mel has dedicated six years to steering the Advisory Council, actively participating in the principal selection process, facilitating numerous staff appointments, and representing the school at the annual CEWA Council dinners. Mel's leadership has been invaluable, and we deeply appreciate her commitment. We also bid a sincere thank you and farewell to Darren Pesich, who likewise concludes his time on the Advisory Council. His positive contributions has significantly impacted the progress of St Jerome's, and we acknowledge his dedication to our school community.

Staffing 2024

It's always exciting to welcome **new staff** members to St Jerome's, and we thank God for calling them here. Susannah, Vanessa and I are delighted to introduce:

- Ineke Liong
- Melinda Alexander
- Pauline Walshe
- Adele Ciscidda
- Amee Coles
- Danielle Glazbrook
- Ellie-Rose Gentile
- Michael Ferguson

During the year we also welcomed:

- Sarah Hicks – teaching science
- Amy Farr – teaching in Year 1
- Jermaine Beins – teaching in Yr 5
- Robyn Cantatore – school psychologist

Welcome to each of you, and we are so glad God called you here.

Farewell to Staff in 2023

Schools each year farewell staff members who have worked in the community, and who have shared in the responsibility of building a Faith inspired school. Our thanks are to be noted for the following staff members who will be leaving, or have left St Jerome's in 2023.

End of Contract at St Jerome's

- Priscilla Hawthorne
- Emma Wood

Transferring, or transferred during 2023 to other Catholic Schools

- Peta Nicolaou – John Bosco College
- Sarah Kicks – Orana Catholic Primary
- Andrew Jones – Seton Catholic College
- Taryn Kalat – Santa Maria College

- Breanna Spencer – Mel Maria Catholic Primary

Retirement

- Pasc Vasile

On Leave

- Sophie Hackett

All the 2024 staff positions can be found on the school web page.

In this AGM report, we want to give a special shout-out to the incredible **Admin Team** comprising **Vicky, Dee, Pasc, Angie, Robyn, and Kim**. Their dedication to the well-being of our school's parents, staff, and students is truly commendable. These six individuals consistently go above and beyond to ensure that our school operates at its absolute best.

Their warm smiles and unwavering commitment shine through as they address a myriad of tasks, including handling inquiries, tending to injuries, managing financial matters, overseeing uniforms, dealing with lost property and children, conducting school tours, facilitating enrolments, managing budgets, handling income receipts, paying bills, and doing it all with a positive attitude—never a complaint is heard. Vanessa, Susannah, and I deeply rely on the invaluable support, advice, and generosity of this exceptional team to effectively lead our school community. On behalf of the entire school community, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to each member of the Admin Team. Your dedication makes our work smoother and our school a better place.

Tonight, we say a fond farewell to **Pasc Vasile**. Pasc began her career at St Jerome's last century, 1995 to be accurate, as a canteen assistant. She rose through the ranks and became Canteen Manager in 2008 and remained in that position before retiring in 2010. In 2012 Pasc returned to employment at St Jerome's but this time in administration, a position Pasc has retained until today.

Pasc is affectionately known as 'our pocket rocket' and no task asked of her was ever too much trouble. Although Pasc's level of 'naughtiness' increased in later years, she will remain a very dear friend and colleague to all the staff at St Jerome's, particularly the admin team. Pasc, we are all going to miss you heaps, and we thank you for your unwavering commitment and dedication to all of us at St Jerome's.

Also tonight we make a special mention for **Angie Grant**, and her 18 years of service in the Uniform Shop. This is a significant change for St Jerome's having uniforms available for parents to purchase at school, to now being purchased online or from a nearby retail store. Angie has been a sole trader for her 18 years at St Jerome's and one can only imagine how many uniforms she has sold to families across the years. What we do know though, is Angie's support for families, her always present smiling face, and her amazing commitment to service. Angie, a very special thank you from all of us here at St Jerome's, that's past and present families. Angie is not going anywhere, we are keeping her talents amongst the administration team.

Library

We express our gratitude to Karen Carkeek for ensuring that our library remains the cherished haven it is for all of us. A school library serves as a gathering spot, a refuge, and a treasure trove of captivating books. The process of maintaining its aesthetic appeal and smooth functionality demands both time and creativity, both of which Karen generously dedicates to St Jerome's.

Karen, your efforts in administering our library and overseeing the Book Club are truly appreciated. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to making our library a welcoming and enriching space for our school community.

The Tuckshop

2023 has been a very busy year for St Jerome's Tuckshop. Some of the big events in Tuckshop have included:

- Pancake Tuesday (where we make up to 300 pancakes in one morning)
- St Jerome's Day - this year we cooked a sausage sizzle for the whole school.
- Sports Day is our biggest event of the year – all the sweet treats we sell over the counter are proudly home made and delicious. We also sell over 300 of our sausage rolls on this day too.

- Grandparents Day is also a huge day for us. Providing home-made food for up to 400 Grandparents is no mean feat – (especially as it’s still a very busy Friday in Tuckshop) - but we love it! It gives us great pleasure to see so many people enjoying our food.

I look back on all the cooking Luisa and Diana have done – and at a quick count they have made and sold 1000 linguine/penne meals and 900 Macaroni Cheese this year so far. With so few volunteers – this is an amazing achievement.

We finish the year with 15 volunteers in total – 5 of these volunteer weekly – and 5 of these are Grandmothers! It is thanks to them that we have time to cook so much home-made food. We will lose two volunteers this year, as their children finish primary school. We urge more families to consider joining us in the Tuckshop! There is fun to be had – and good times to be shared. *Renate Martin.*

It has become a weekly tradition for St Jerome’s to eagerly anticipate the most-read app post, which consistently arrives on Sunday night at 6:30 pm. Renate and Team Tuckshop keep us informed about the delightful menu for the week and any assistance needed for upcoming events.

Ladies, your outstanding efforts in providing not just food but also care do not go unnoticed. Thank you for the incredible work you do, enhancing our school community with your culinary talents and dedication.

Our groundsman, John Williams, diligently oversees the school's surroundings. He takes care of pruning and mulching as necessary and promptly addresses any issues or breakages. Additionally, John is consistently the first to arrive and the last to leave when it comes to setting up and packing away for school events, be it sports, art, or special occasions.

John, your attention to detail plays a crucial role in ensuring our school is a safe, clean, and aesthetically pleasing environment. We appreciate your dedication and hard work in maintaining the overall well-being of our school grounds.

EA's

We extend our heartfelt acknowledgment to the highly dedicated team of Education Assistants (EAs) at St Jerome's. *Angelica, Claudia, Liz, Asta, Kirstie, Sandra, Di, Melissa, Yvonne, Ines, Penny, and Kathleen. Anna, Danielle, Debbie, Deborah, Marie, Nancy, Sue, Asri and Andrea.*

These EAs work tirelessly, providing steadfast and supportive assistance that often goes unnoticed in the fast-paced environment of a school. Their crucial role becomes evident when one imagines the school without their presence, as they contribute significantly to the seamless operation of daily activities.

The responsibilities shouldered by EAs span a wide spectrum, requiring them to adapt quickly to changing tasks and assist various individuals throughout the school. Their invaluable contributions are essential for the smooth functioning of our educational institution, and at St. Jerome's, we are fortunate to have an exceptional team of EAs. To the ladies of our EA team, we express our sincere gratitude for your adaptability and the myriad of positive impacts you bring to our school. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, and from all of us, thank you for the significant role you play in making St Jerome's the exceptional learning environment that it is.

Leadership

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my esteemed colleagues in leadership, **Vanessa and Susannah**, for their invaluable advice and unwavering support throughout 2023. Their dedication and passion as leaders are truly remarkable, and at their level, excellence doesn't just improve—it evolves. Their love and respect are echoed by everyone fortunate enough to work alongside them.

Advocates

A sincere thank you to **Tess Lornie, Christine Celenza, Peta Nicolaou, Sarah Wohlsein, Manuela Benino, and Carmel Searle** for their exceptional leadership as Advocates at St Jerome's. Their pivotal role in supporting both staff and students has been instrumental in navigating the bustling and dynamic environment of our school.

Their generosity, dedication, and unwavering commitment to their respective areas of leadership have not gone unnoticed. Each of these individuals has demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities, contributing significantly to the smooth functioning of our school. We are truly grateful for their tireless efforts and the positive impact they have had on the entire school community.

Thank you, Tess, Christine, Peta, Sarah, Manuela, and Carmel, for your invaluable contributions and for embodying the spirit of leadership with excellence.

Fr Vijay

Father Vijay faithfully visits the school every day, and it brings joy to witness his presence during our Monday morning prayer. His genuine commitment extends to fostering a harmonious collaboration between the school and the Parish. Regular discussions with Fr Vijay provide reassurance of his steadfast support for all the initiatives undertaken by St Jerome's.

The support emanating from the Parish under Father Vijay's guidance is not only acknowledged but also held in high esteem. Father Vijay actively contributes as a member of the School Advisory Council and plays a pivotal role in staff appointments. His active involvement strengthens the bond between the school and the Parish, enriching the overall community spirit at St. Jerome's.

St Jerome's holds a unique place in our hearts, and numerous individuals play a pivotal role in nurturing this vibrant community. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved and pray that God sends forth abundant blessings upon you for your generosity and unwavering commitment.

To the exceptional staff of St Jerome's, your dedication creates a secure, supportive, pastoral, and educationally enriching learning environment for every child within these walls. Your tireless efforts deserve recognition and appreciation for the profound impact you make. Thank you for everything you do.

On behalf of Vanessa, Susannah, and myself, we extend warm wishes to you and your families for a joyfilled Christmas celebration.

May the birth of the Christ child fill your hearts with peace and happiness, bringing blessings to you and your loved ones throughout this festive season. God bless you all.

Chris Cully
Principal