Dear Parents,

Why bother with Christmas?

I recently read through the latest edition of a popular women’s magazine which had lovely articles on how families throughout Australia would be celebrating Christmas and, I must admit, I felt uneasy. Would it be that simple! No, it wasn’t the exquisite decorations or the wonderful menus that made me uneasy. It was the image of happy families coming together with peace, harmony and joy. I wish them well and sincerely hope and pray that their Christmas is as it is portrayed. But for many families Christmas it is not like that. Christmas is a minefield where we try to make peace and harmony through many and various challenges. Estrangements, addictions, mental illness, grief from deaths through the past year are just some of the major hurdles that have to be faced. Then add the ‘lesser challenges’ of over-excitement, too much food, too much alcohol (leading to free and frank discussion) and one sometimes wonders why we bother?

We bother because that is the meaning of Christmas. When Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph did not provide the ideal conditions, - life was beyond their control – but they did the best they could. Those who worshipped, shepherds and foreigners, were despised outsiders, and the threat of violence was in the air. That is the world God chose to be born in – a world like ours with its mess, muddle and pain. God is comfortable there; God knows how to handle it. So when we feel overwhelmed, let us turn to God and pray: “Be born in us this day.” And if everything isn’t ‘happy families’ we can still know that God is with us – Immanuel. Come Lord Jesus, be born in us this day.

Loving God, you sent your son Jesus into our midst, experiencing the pain and challenges that we have to face. Knowing him to be our brother may we turn to him when our cares overwhelm us. We ask this in his name confident that you will hear us.

Dates for your diaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 7th Dec</td>
<td>DANCEFEVER Interschool Challenge 6pm @ DEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 9th Dec</td>
<td>Grade 6 Mass at St Mary’s Cathedral</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geeveston Christmas Pageant 6pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 12th Dec</td>
<td>Grade 6 Dinner 5.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 13th Dec</td>
<td>Carols Night 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 15th Dec</td>
<td>End of Year Mass (EOY Awards announced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LAST DAY OF SCHOOL 10.00am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri 3rd Feb</td>
<td>Bookday &amp; Uniform sales 9-12am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 8th Feb</td>
<td>Students return for 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REMINDER
P&F Raffle tickets to be returned by Friday 9th December 2011.

4690 Huon Highway, Geeveston, Tas, 7116, Ph 62971313, Fax 62971990
shg@catholic.tas.edu.au
This Friday our End of Year Reports will be coming home with the students. I hope parents find these informative and a clear way of seeing the progress and achievements of the children. There will also be a letter with the reports informing parents of their children’s class grouping for 2012. If there is anything in the reports that need clarification, please contact your child’s teacher.

Last Thursday evening our School Board got together to have a meal to celebrate another successful year. The School Board is crucial group in the school that oversee the financial running of SHCS. Thank you to our Board Chair Mr Tony Bradley for his leadership and dedication to our community and to the other Board members – Fr Greg, Mrs Fiona Donato, Mr David Clark, Mrs Cathy Coad and Mr Michael Buick. In 2012 we will be looking for a couple of new Board members.

DANCEFEVER Challenge
All Grade 3-6 families should have received a note last Friday afternoon about the Dancefever Challenge that is happening tomorrow night at the Derwent Entertainment Centre (6.00pm). The Challenge promises to be a great night with our students very excited about competing against the other schools in a real dance competition. Please ensure people catching the buses are punctual as the buses can’t afford to wait. We are on a very tight time frame. Dancefever has been a great success and we are definitely running the program again in 2012.

Christmas Carols
Please keep your fingers crossed for a decent night next Tuesday for our Christmas Carols evening. Families can start arriving at school around 5.00pm for a picnic dinner on the school oval. The P&F are running a sausage sizzle and will also be selling soft drinks. The carols will commence around 6pm. It is a school function, which means it is a dry function and a smoke free environment. Unfortunately we have no plan B, as the hall will not be enough room but we will make a decision early in the day if the weather looks ordinary.

Book Day
Booklists for 2012 will be sent home to families very shortly. Families have two options to either order and pay online and have the books delivered or collect the books at our book day on Friday 3rd February between 9.00am – 12.00.

End Of Year Activities
Grade 6 Mass – This Friday our Grade 6 students are travelling to St Mary’s Cathedral to celebrate their time in Catholic Education with students from all the other Catholic Schools in the South. It is an important event because it is one of Archbishop Adrian’s last celebrations before he retires at the end of the year.

Grade 6 Dinner – Our Grade 6 families are gathering together on Monday evening next week to have a meal together. As with tradition the staff will be cooking tea and serving the families on the evening. A great celebration for the students and their families to reflect on their years at SHCS!

End of Year Mass – The highlight of our end of year celebrations is our Mass on Thursday 15th December. The Mass commences at 10.00am and will be held in the school hall. After the Mass our end of year awards will be presented. There is a Josephite Award for all grades from Kinder – 6 and four special Grade 6 awards – General Excellence, Christianity Award, Citizenship Award and Creative Arts Award.

Kinder Orientation Day
Last Friday morning we held our Kindergarten Orientation Day for our 2012 Kinders. The children enjoyed participating in a range of activities with Miss Demarco and Mrs Watkins while I met with the parents for a chat and morning tea. Thank you to Miss Demarco, Mrs Klein and Mrs Watkins for facilitating another successful Pre-kinder program.
Australian Mobile Recycling

Sacred Heart Catholic School has registered as part of the drive to recycle unwanted mobile phones.

Australian Mobile Recycling was founded in September 2011. Our aim is to collect as many used and unwanted mobile phones as possible. All mobile phones received will be recycled for reuse. This means they will be refurbished for resale.

Each handset is restored to factory conditions and all sim card and memory cards are destroyed.

Any phones that are beyond repair will be broken down into their constituent parts and recycled by Australian licensed recyclers.

For your efforts your organisation will receive $3 for every mobile phone returned.
Uniform

We are now taking orders for 2012. If you wish to pre-order your uniform please return the form attached. If you include full payment with your order it will be sent home before the end of term. Alternatively it can be packed for you to collect on book day, 3rd February between 9am and 12pm.

Regards
Maree

The Huon Valley Council is intending to open a new purpose built Early Learning and Care Centre in Geeveston and is interested to receive feedback from the community on the inclusion of Outside School Hours Care for children 5 to 12 years.

Feedback is now sought from families regarding the establishment of an Outside School Hours Care program to be located at Geeveston in 2012. If a need is established for 2012, opening a program would be subject to identifying a temporary venue until the Early Learning and Care Centre opens at the end of the year.

To register your interest in using Outside School Hours Care please complete the questionnaire below and return it to the Council by 16 December 2011.

Parent contact details:

__________________________

Telephone: _____________________ Mobile: _____________________
Email: _________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Days required</th>
<th>Regularity of care</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M T W TH F</td>
<td>Weekly or Casual</td>
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<td>M T W TH F</td>
<td>Weekly or Casual</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Will you require after school care past 2012?  Yes  No

Other comments:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Responses can be returned to a survey box located at the following locations:
- Geeveston Child Care Centre
- Geeveston Medical Centre
- Huon Valley Council’s Customer Service Centre – 40 Main Street, Huonville
- Children’s Services Office at Huonville; or

Mail to PO Box 210, Huonville 7109 / Email: hvc@huonvalley.tas.gov.au.

Thank you for your interest and feedback.
**Student Assistance Scheme (STAS) 2012**

The scheme provides assistance for low-income families towards the cost of levies for students enrolled from kindergarten through to senior secondary level. It is available to students attending a Government or registered Non-Government school or college and those students eligible to pay levies at the Tasmanian Academy or the Tasmanian Polytechnic.

The Minister for Education has expanded the student assistance scheme to provide access for grandparents raising grandchildren.

The school or college will receive funding on behalf of eligible students. This financial assistance is provided towards the cost of school levies.

**Income Test:** Income assessment is applied to parents/guardians of dependent students applying for assistance under the scheme. Independent students are required to meet the income test and also provide proof of their independent status. The income test used for the scheme is included on the application form each year.

The income test table used for the STAS 2011 scheme is shown below:

**Maximum Total Taxable Parental Income 2010-11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Dependent Children</th>
<th>Income per Week</th>
<th>Annual Parental Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$567</td>
<td>$29,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$653</td>
<td>$33,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$743</td>
<td>$38,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$841</td>
<td>$43,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$944</td>
<td>$49,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$1,060</td>
<td>$55,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$1,174</td>
<td>$61,101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8*</td>
<td>$1,291</td>
<td>$67,083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For more than 8 children, add $119 per week or $6006 per annum for each additional dependent.

Application forms for Student Assistance in 2012 are now available from the school office or can be downloaded via the link on our school website. For general enquiries contact the school office or for specific information on; assistance in completing the application form or the application procedures, contact the:

BSS Service Centre
Department of Education
GPO Box 169
HOBART 7001

Telephone: 1800 816 057
Facsimile: (03) 6233 7720
email: STAS@education.tas.gov.au

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**Term Dates for 2012**

Term 1: 8th February - 25th May
Easter: 6th April - 13th April
Term 2: 18th June - 7th September
Term 3: 24th September - 20th December

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Huon Highway, Geeveston, Tas, 7116, Ph 62971313, Fax 62971990
shg@catholic.tas.edu.au
Sacred Heart Catholic School is participating in the Christmas Pageant this year, at Geeveston on Friday 9th December.

Our school has had great fun in the pageant in previous years. It would not have been possible without the support and enthusiasm of the children and their families. So we hope you have your festive spirit ready and come along and be part of the pageant.

We have decided to enter as a pedestrian and bicycle group, with adult supervision at all times. This will enable children to hand out lollies and balloons along the way. There is to be no throwing of lollies and all bike riders must have helmets, otherwise they will be refused participation.

Children are encouraged to dress up although, if you do not wish to dress up, please still come along and walk with us anyway.

Everyone is to meet on the grass near the bridge, on School Road at 6.00pm. The parade will depart from School Road at 6.30pm and conclude at the Heritage Park. There will be a BBQ to follow (gold coin donation). There will also be face painting and a jumping castle.

With the changeable weather, please ensure that children have a Santa hat (or normal hat), a drink and a coat.

If your child/children would like to participate, please return the slip below to school, or phone me on 0409 337 065.

Parent/guardian participation is always appreciated. If you are able to walk with the parade please indicate on the slip also.

Thankyou
Maree McQueen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child/Children’s Name:</th>
<th>Walking or bicycle</th>
<th>Class:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents Name:</th>
<th>Do you intend to stay with the floats: YES / NO (please circle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</table>
Dear parents and students,

Christmas is a fabulous time of year when we all get together with family and friends to give gifts and open presents. But it is also the time of year when we celebrate that God gave us the most special gift of all—Jesus!

You too can give a free gift to a child who is doing it tough this Christmas.

We are asking families to donate a small gift for the giving tree, which will be collected by the ABC giving tree walkers on Thursday 8th December. Students are asked to bring gifts wrapped to their class teachers with it labeled if it is for a boy and girl and the age of the child. Students are asked to put their gift under the giving tree in the office foyer. Students might like to use some of your own pocket money, or do some odd jobs around the house in exchange for mum buying the gift.

This is a Free Gift, just as Jesus was a free gift to us and your chance to bring some joy to another child this season. There is no competition and there are no prizes—just you and your gift.

God said to us, in the Bible, in Corinthians...

“Each person should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

2 Corinthians 9:7

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

6.00pm Geeston—Fr Graeme Howard.
6.00pm Cygnet
Midnight with Carols—Franklin
10.00am Ranelagh.
“MINI SPORTS”
A new way for little kids to play sport

‘Life. Be in it’ Mini Sports is an all new program designed for children aged 3 to 5 years with an opportunity to experience sports in a fun and healthy manner. Each of the classes takes in basic skills of the chosen sport and mixes this with fun games and activities to:

* stimulate eye hand co-ordination
* interaction with other children,
* interaction between child and parent
* learn basic skills

Each lesson is based around a central animal theme to enable children to mimic the animal movements. This provides a fun platform from which to work from.

Sports to be included are – Soccer, AFL, Netball / Basketball

All our sessions are indoors so there are no cancellations due to wet weather or baking sunshine. Class size is limited to a MAX of 12 children.

Each class is 45 minutes in duration to provide a mix of specific sports skills, balance and co-ordination plus some time for a few fun games at the end.

Enrolments now open for 2012 - Book early, do not miss out.
Classes in all areas.
Kingston, Howrah, Bellerive, Lauderdale, Richmond, Huonville, Glenorchy

To find out more or to locate a venue near you.
call our office on 6229 5600 or visit www.tas.lifebeinit.org

Huon Highway, Geeveston, Tas, 7116, Ph 62971313, Fax 62971990
shg@catholic.tas.edu.au