

Make Jesus Real

DECEMBER 2019
BULLETIN



GIVING THANKS

On Thursday 28 November America celebrated the national holiday of Thanksgiving. The Thanksgiving holiday is briefly explained by this video prepared by National Geographic, <https://youtu.be/Ym4izq-rrow>.

The idea of a national holiday where families gather to give thanks really appeals to me. The *My Friend Jesus* text (page 85), *Spirit of Jesus* text (pages 34 & 35) and *MJR 24/7* text (pages 45-47) all refer to an "Attitude of Gratitude."

A simple Google search can reveal how an attitude of gratitude can improve your health and wellbeing. So, as the year comes to a close, we have the perfect opportunity to reflect on what we are grateful for this year.

Don't get me wrong, there have been challenges throughout the year for everyone, whether they be health problems, relationship issues, perhaps insecure employment, financial challenges, and the list goes on. It would be rare for anyone to be able to look back on a year with complete satisfaction.

There are many things, not necessarily big things, to be thankful for:

- ✝ A cup of tea or coffee with your spouse or a friend
- ✝ The peace that comes from a walk along the beach
- ✝ A hug and a kiss from your son or daughter
- ✝ A handwritten card or email of thanks for your efforts throughout the year
- ✝ Someone holding the door for you as you enter a building, laden down with a heavy load

What are you grateful for this year?

God bless,

Catherine Simmonds

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GREETINGS FROM NORTH AMERICA!

Hi Everyone!

My wife and I are thoroughly enjoying our travels together and have discovered that the world is full of so many wonderful people. Although many people rely on Google Maps to get around these days, we have been asking strangers for help and this has been a real blessing.

Each person that we have approached has been very generous with their time and have gone out of their way to help us. Recently in Seattle we met a guy called Scott who sat and planned our whole Seattle experience with us. His enthusiasm and insight opened our eyes to all that Seattle has to offer. Siri and Google just cannot give you that level of human interest and emotion.

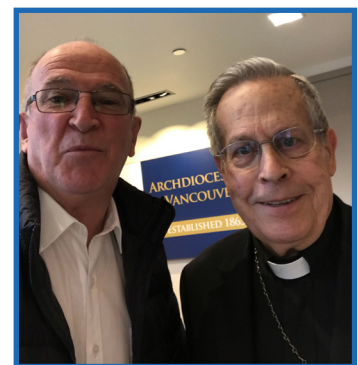
Canadians are so welcoming and are especially generous on the roads. We had the opportunity to meet with people from the Diocese of Vancouver about MJR and left some copies of MJR 24/7 with them. Bishop David spoke very positively about Australia.



I was interested to find out that in the Seattle Diocese the working week finishes at 12 noon on a Friday. That might be something we could consider implementing in Australia!

We are also heading off to Oregon and San Francisco to do a Frank Sinatra and to "keep spreading the news".

In California, I got talking to a beautiful family and I did a magic trick that ended by giving the 15-year-old daughter a small koala and the son (who is studying to be a missionary), a small Tasmanian devil. Would you believe that they snuck out and bought me a pair of Californian socks in return?



I love this t-shirt - it says it all! Let's look for the small miracles each day because they are everywhere!

In a Bubba Gump restaurant in San Francisco, I saw this sign:



What beautiful MJR message.

All the best,
Marty Ogle



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MITCH'S TRAVELS

Hello to you all,

Working with students at the **Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School** in Tasmania, there were many positive responses to the questions asked. Here is a summary of what the children had to say.

Q1

WHO SHOWED YOU THE SPIRIT OF JESUS OVER THE LAST 3 DAYS? I SAW THE SPIRIT OF JESUS WHEN...

- “A driver let my mum and me in to the traffic, when we couldn't get in (Thoughtful).” Isabella.
- “When I won my race she came over and gave me a big hug (Encouraging). Imogen went out of her way to get my lunch box for me (Friendship).”
- “Hamish let me use his ball during the break (Giving).”
- “Toby, Jacob and Seb. When a ball hit me in the face, they ran over to help me (Compassion).”
- “Maddie and Meg let me play in their game. (Including).”

Q2

WHAT SMALL WAYS CAN YOU SHOW THE SPIRIT OF JESUS AT HOME AND SCHOOL?

- “Say “Thanks “ at least 4 times each day at home for washing my clothes and cooking for me.”
- “Doing as I am asked cheerfully, trying to be kinder than I am.”
- “Helping when I am not asked to. Doing things without moaning and groaning.”
- “Include other kids in my games. Thanking a person and using their name.”
- “Going to bed when I am asked to and getting up in the morning when I am called.”

Q3

HOW HAVE I GROWN AS A PERSON? WHAT HAVE I IMPROVED ON?

- “I have more friends and I am happier because I am kinder than I was.”
- “I have been trying to be more friendly, resilient and helpful.”
- “More thankful for what I have, and I say thanks more than before.”
- “I try to be more encouraging at school, and I am more cheerful and help more at home.”
- “My attitude is more positive and I want to feed the positive wolf.”

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MITCH'S TRAVELS CONT'D

Q4

WHAT LESSONS FROM THE SPIRIT OF JESUS BOOK HELPED YOU TO GROW AS A PERSON AND THAT YOU WANT TO TAKE INTO YOUR LIFE?

- “Pg 20. How did Jesus serve others and I want to be more like Him.”
- “Pg 70. How to grow as a better person. It helps me to feed the positive wolf.”
- “Pg 34. Do I have an Attitude of Gratitude? Happy people are happy with what they have.”
- “Pg 37. Do I win the hard ball in my choices I make. Help with self-discipline.”
- “Pg 8. Asking myself every day 'Where did I see the Spirit of Jesus in my life today'?”
- “Pg 41. Jesus works through us when we give of ourselves to others.”
- “Pg 10. A smile is an act of love a gift to that person (Mother Teresa).”
- “Pg 34. Say thanks 6 times a day and 4 at home, equals 10.”
- “Pg 51. Happiness come from doing the right thing even though it is hard.”
- “Pg 13. Helped me to think I can set the table and get my own breakfast to help mum more.”
- “Pg 66. Learn from your mistakes and don't make them again.”
- “Pg 69. Do I reflect on my day to be switched onto the Spirit of Jesus?”
- “Pg 72. Go to your heart room as I realise I have somewhere to go to talk to Jesus.”

Q4 WHAT SMALL AREAS CAN I IMPROVE ON TO GROW AS A PERSON UNTIL CHRISTMAS AND BEYOND?

- “To be show more patience to others, be more resilient and say thanks more (have an Attitude of Gratitude).”
- “To be switched on to the 'Oh Yeah' moments when I see the *Spirit of Jesus* in my life.”
- “To be more of a giver than a taker as giving of ourselves to others makes me happy.”
- “Treat my brothers better and not moaning and groaning as much.”
- “To be more thankful for what my parents have done for me.”
- “To do as I am asked more cheerfully at home, and using please and thank you more.”
- “I need to improve my attitude. I need to feed the positive wolf.”

Cheers,

Mitch

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MJR SCHOOLS

MJR WITH GRADE 5 AND 6

HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL, TASMANIA

In Grade 6 at **Holy Rosary Catholic School**, we had the goal of teaching MJR through weekly circle time sessions. To do this, we created a Google Slide presentation that matched the activities in the students' MJR book (this is directly aimed at Grades 5 and 6).

The Google Slides have benefited our co-teaching context. There were two classes (56 students) in Grade 6. The Google slide show assisted students who did not have their MJR book to connect with the material. It is also engaging because you can add your own relevant videos to support the content covered in the MJR topics. Further to this, we provided students with established learning intentions and success criteria which allows greater clarity regarding the associated goals for each lesson. As a teaching team we have found this particularly beneficial as the circle time environment provides all students with an opportunity to engage, share and reflect on the topic. We aim to assist students to prepare for social and emotional wellbeing issues that they are likely to experience as they head into High School. I have attached two work samples from the topics respect and tolerance.

Here are some comments from the Grade 6 students about the activities:

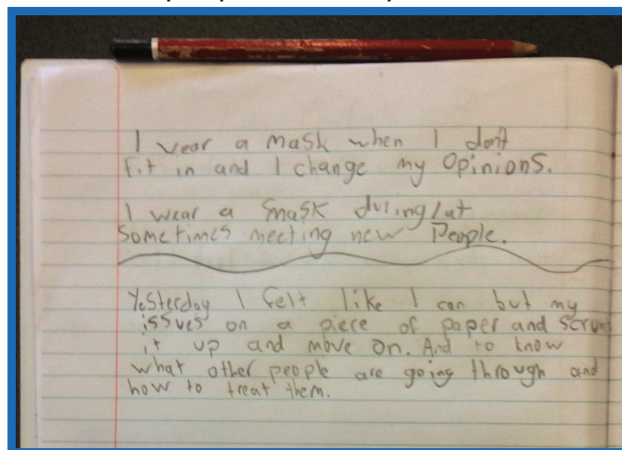
“It shows your real self and makes you realise who you are and who you want to be.”
– Mia

“It's Getting and hearing all the nice comments about me from my classmates, and how to be nice and how that has a ripple effect on others.” – Ashton

“It has helped me to be a better person. To have respect and care for each other.”
– Ben

“I like how whenever we do MJR in circle time we can always be open, and how it is a safe place to share your feelings.” – Brigitte

“It teaches people how to accept people with different feelings, and to do kind acts for other people.” – Brody



Jesse – Tolerance (Religion book)

In response to Technology and Respect: Reflection

Write a reflection about how you think the use of technology (phones, iPads, games, PS4, XBOX, PC etc) can affect your relationship with others?

Well in my family it does affect our relationship with each other because we are all on our devices, all the time and I know that some people have apps like Snapchat, tik tok, where people can say what they think, so I think that devices and social media can distract us from the world around us.

Matt Leutrell
Teacher
Holy Rosary Catholic School
Tasmania

Danae – Respect (seasaw note)

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MJR SCHOOLS CONT'D

PAUL CRENNAN, CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE TASMANIA

Greetings from Tassie!

As we approach the end of the school year, as Marty's replacement whilst he is on long service leave travelling in the cooler climates of Canada and USA, I have been visiting Tasmanian schools. In talking with the Year 6s as they prepare to move to Secondary School, the theme I have followed is that of "Having a Go - Where to Now?".

Incorporating this into my time in the Year 6 classes, we have talked about their journey and memories from primary school. The students were able to reflect on what MJR has done for them and how it is preparing them for the next step into secondary school. An important message in this discussion is, whilst we remember all the great memories of primary, we also take the opportunity to show gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed to their primary school experience. The point that flowed from this discussion, was as a 11 or 12-year-old student in Tasmania, how can they make a difference in our world by being the best **for** their world, not necessarily the best **in** the world?

In stimulating the conversation with the students, I have presented them all with the following challenge:

"If your school had their own Hall of Fame, what legacy would you leave behind and how would you be described in terms of the person you are, not necessarily based on sporting or academic achievements?"



Along with the Hall of Fame challenge, I have asked all students to consider providing a reflection for the rest of the school regarding the value of MJR and their favourite memories of MJR in primary school. This reflection has been captured in a short video which they then will have the opportunity to share with others in the school. A couple of the schools were even using them as part of their end of year presentation ceremony or assembly. This video presentation promoted great discussion and great memories regarding their time at primary school.

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PAUL CRENNAN, CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE TASMANIA, CONT'D...

The second part of my time with the Year 6 students has been focusing on the move to High School. For lots of different reasons, this presents a variety of challenges and for some, trepidations. Across all classes, the students and I discussed how we overcome these concerns and how we can face these challenges by taking the next step. In our discussions it was quite reassuring that many of the points of discussion were very similar and provided a great starting point regarding how we face these challenges head on but more importantly knowing that all students had various support networks to assist them as they move into Year 7.

Along with the Year 6s, I have had the pleasure of working with Year 5s embarking on the leadership process as they move to Year 6 in 2020. The main question I had for the Year 5s was, "What is Leadership and how can I be a leader?" In discussing that each student has the opportunity to be a leader in Year 6, one of the points I was constantly reinforcing is that a leader is not necessarily someone who wears a badge that says 'leader.' In fact, it is hoped that all the Year 5s will see themselves as leaders in one way or another next year.

This involved not only classroom-based activities but venturing on camp with both schools. The focus for both MJR in the classroom and the camp was to have them participate in a range of team building activities that enabled them to see different forms of leadership, the differing qualities each person brings to leadership and more importantly building class spirit with a strong emphasis on T.E.A.M. – Together Everyone Achieves More.

As we move into 2020, planning has begun in earnest for a Statewide Tasmanian MJR Gathering – "**Living the Good News**" in March. Accompanying the gathering will be the promotion of an MJR Ambassador in each of our schools as we continue to provide the opportunity for our students to grow through MJR and respond to the invitation to 'Live the Good News'.

Paul Crennan
Education Officer: Values Education
Tasmanian Catholic Education Office

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