**Lent**

We have begun our journey for the Lenten season across the school. There are visible ‘Lent’ displays around the school prompting students, staff and parents to reflect on their actions during this time of spiritual renewal.

We started our Lenten season last week with the celebration of Ash Wednesday. The students in Years 3 to 6 students were involved in the School Mass and the Year 1 and 2 students celebrated with a small prayer service. Each class also received a purple prayer cloth and a small dish of ashes to place on their prayer table for the Lenten season. Father Michael spoke to the students about where the ashes came from. He also explained the three words- almsgiving, prayer and fasting- which students might be more aware of during Lent. He encouraged every child in the school to take home a Project Compassion Box after the Ash Wednesday celebrations.

Marita also organised for each class to have an “Alleluia” which was coloured in and then placed in a time capsule decorated by Mrs. B. and Miss V. The “Alleluias” were then dug under the ground as a symbolic gesture of our time of renewal during Lent. After the holidays, the capsules will be opened and the ‘Alleluias’ celebrated. There has been a greater focus on the importance of ‘action’ for the students in the classroom and playground during the Lenten period, rather than just giving up things.

**Catholic Education Week** A couple of weeks ago, I invited Year 5 students to apply for an opportunity to attend the Mass of St. Patrick for Schools at St. Patrick’s Cathedral on Thursday March 20th. Ten students wrote to me explaining why they wanted to represent St. Martin’s. I will be taking these 10 students from Year 5 to represent our school. A reminder that all permission slips need to be returned by the due date. Details for the day have been explained in the permission note sent home.

I have attached a copy of the Lenten Prayer for you all to reflect on. This prayer has been displayed with our school Lenten display in the office area.

Thanks Sandra (Religious Education Leader: Learning and Teaching)
Dear Lord,

During these forty days’ time of Lent, give me strength to turn away from worldliness and lift my eyes to You.

Grant me the required discipline to make a daily commitment to drawing closer to You.

Help me recognize the many opportunities that you offer to me to draw ever closer to You each day.

Help me remove myself from my busy-ness in order to spend time with You.

Help me turn off the noise around me so I can listen to You.

In its place, lead me to Your Word in Sacred Scripture, art, and music.

Lord, let me never forget Your suffering and Passion and what you sacrificed for my salvation.

Amen.