

NEWSLETTER FOR NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES, KINDERGARTENS, PLAYGROUPS AND INTERESTED PARTIES OCTOBER 2014

GREETINGS

Tēnā koutou katoa, malo e lelei, talofa lava, ni sa bula vinaka, talohani, kia orana, fakalofa lahi atu and blessings and warm greetings to you all.

I can't quite believe what a lovely spring we've been having, and can only hope that it will lead to a glorious summer. I'm wandering round saying thank you to God for the blossom trees and the clematis in my garden, for the lilac beginning to flower, and for the newly planted lettuces that are almost ready to provide their first leaves for salad. I hope the gardens in your services are inspiring you and the children with similar delight.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Auckland, which has announced in its school newsletter that it intends to open a preschool in 2013.

And another congratulations

A group of 14 teachers is currently working through the 8 modules of the Certificate in Catholic Early Childhood teaching in Auckland. Some of the teachers who completed the Certificate last year have continued to meet once per term and to form a strong network, sharing ideas and visiting each other's services. (From the Auckland Catholic Education Services newsletter).

Littlies and Electronic Gadgets

I am aware that you use plenty of electronic tools in your services, and I wonder how much of the time you take your lead from the children - taking photos on phones and iPads, and texting seem to be high on the play of little ones, and of course skyping to relatives who are not in the same town or country, including wandering off with the iPad to show grandma the latest artwork, toy or skill.

Perhaps, as in a recent article in Iti Rearea, you use skype to give your four-year olds contact with the primary school and class group they will transition to. Perhaps the children use Mimio. As teachers perhaps you use google drive and blog to provide evidence of your own learning and reflection. Perhaps you have a Facebook page as a general noticeboard for families, and perhaps you use Vimeo. Perhaps you have a string of apps that you find particularly useful. Here are two mentioned in the Iti Rearea article: IMAG-N-O-TRON, and KidPix3D. I looked for them on google, and was enchanted, without even downloading and using them!

It would be great if you would care to flick me an email with your favourite techie ideas, apps etc, so we can spread the good news. And because we are Catholic services, it would be really good if some of you have discovered some wonderful Catholic Character tools, or uses of tools for Catholic Character.

(By the way, at the start of January 2015 Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/NZ Childcare Association will be renamed 'Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand'. And in case you are wondering, Te Rito Maioha can be translated as 'the treasured shoot' found at the centre of the flax bush, i.e. the child).

Finally

Reminder: do share this newsletter around, and do send us news of your service, to share in the next newsletter.

If you know anyone that wants to receive this newsletter, please get them to email me (see below), and I will add them to the list. Alternatively, the newsletter goes up on the website, (address below), at about the same time as it goes out to you by post.

Christmas is coming, and the end of the year

Just a little thought from John O'Donohue, in *Benedictus, A Book of Blessings*

As this year draws to its end,
We give thanks for the gifts it brought...
The days when the veil lifted
And the soul could see delight;
When a quiver caressed the heart
In the sheer exuberance of being here...
We bless this year for all we have learned.

Many blessings to you all.

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