

NEWSLETTER FOR NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES, KINDERGARTENS, PLAYGROUPS AND INTERESTED PARTIES NOVEMBER 2012

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.

It is hard to believe that the end of the year is almost upon us. We wish you all many blessings for Advent and Christmas, and hope that you have a refreshing break over the holiday period.

Catching Up with Some of our Services

Jubilee Catholic Early Childhood Centre, Hamilton, celebrated its 10th Anniversary on the 19th October 2012. Lisa Vedder provided us with this report:

A joyful ceremony took place that included current and past families and staff, our Board of Directors and members of our Cathedral Parish and neighbouring Marian School community. Fr Philip blessed the children and the building, the children sang waiata, and a tree was planted by Christina Reymer. Mike Hanaray the Board Chairman, did the honours, cutting the 10 year celebration cake, which was followed by morning tea. Speeches echoed the purpose of our mission in which Jubilee is a community where Christian values are experienced, developed and nurtured in each child. Jubilee continues to exist to provide care and education of young children through the presence of Jesus in all that we do. Lisa Vedder, Jubilee's first Centre Supervisor, was presented with flowers in recognition and thanks for her ten years' service to the centre and to all the children that have passed through its doors.

The history of the centre:

Christina Reymer had the vision for a Catholic Early Childhood Centre in the year 2000.

A playgroup was established from Clyde St House in 2001, and the vision came to fruition in 2002 when Jubilee became fully licensed and officially opened in October of 2002.

The support Jubilee has received over the past ten years from the community, families and staff has reinforced the positive position Jubilee holds in the Early Childhood sector.

To these and to all the children that have touched our lives and taught us so many lessons along the way please accept our thanks for your part in the Jubilees journey to date.

Our wider Catholic education community congratulates Jubilee Centre on this milestone, and prays that all will continue to go well for the children, families and staff of the Centre.

(insert photo)

Christina Reymer (Founder) and Daniella Ramos plant the tree.

St Mary's Preschool, Blenheim have a number of interesting initiatives on the go. Wendy Donald tells me that the recent focus on cultural diversity is going well. The preschool had a lovely evening that included the parish and the school, and included a lot of input from Pasifika and Philipino families – the two cultures that have become very significant locally. Everyone feels they have a place at the centre, and can contribute to it. Leading up to Christmas they have begun work on the Jesse tree with a visit to the church, and the children are learning to sign as they sing Away in a Manger. This is providing excellent body-brain stimulus and integration for the children, who are learning fast, and for the teachers, who are finding it challenging as they have to learn the signs in reverse so that they can mirror them for the children.

A Website Well Worth Investigating

www.storypark.com is a free new website designed to improve engagement with parents, save teachers time and improve learning and development for children. Storypark started from the dream of Lynda MacDonald of Aroha Early Learning Centre in Gore, who wanted to enable her teachers to record children's daily stories and share them in a secure online space with families. Since then Storypark has been shaped by parents, earlychildhood teachers and professional development advisors into a delightful site which is really easy to use and pretty powerful. Every child gets a private online portfolio where teachers and family can share and provide feedback on learning and development. The founders have committed to always providing a free version of the site. I really enjoyed looking at the site, and think it's likely to be very useful.

Catholic Early Childhood Modules for Teachers

Staff from Jubilee in Hamilton have now completed four modules, travelling up from Hamilton to attend them, and report that what they have learned is really adding depth to their practice. They gave warm praise to Margaret Nicholls as a fantastic early childhood educator, and say that more and more teachers, including some who are not at Catholic services, are attending the courses. Our congratulations to the Auckland diocese on this wonderfully successful development, which fulfils a big need.

Finally

It is a joy to catch up with people at our services – do phone me!
Best wishes to you all for the end of the year, and may you all have a happy and blessed Christmas.

Susan Apáthy
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