



Dear Parents and Caregivers - **Ngā mātua aroha, me te Kaitiaki**

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Kia orana, Bula vinaka, Warmest Greetings to you all.

The season of Advent has now started with us preparing for the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day. Some of the classes have been studying about the Jesse Tree and its significance to the liturgical season. Advent comes from the Latin word meaning “coming.” Jesus is coming, and Advent is intended to be a season of preparation for His arrival. While we typically regard Advent as a joyous season, it is also intended to be a period of preparation. Prayer, penance and fasting are appropriate during this season.

It is important for all of us to take some time to reflect on the real meaning of Christmas rather than get caught up in the busy commercial aspect of this time of year. We need to think about all the blessings we have received and keep the ‘Faith, Hope and Love’ alive in all we do. We need to take the time to be thankful for everything we have and remember that there are so many others in the world far less fortunate than we are.

As the school year comes to a close, we must also celebrate the wonderful achievements of so many of our children during the year. They have worked really hard with their teachers to lift progress and achieve at the highest possible level. We have achieved our Ministry Targets but must not relax our efforts next year, but continue to strive to be better at everything we do, particularly in teaching and learning.

2016 is going to give us the chance to continue the progress we have been making as the planning process starts for our promised property redevelopment. We will continue to work very hard coping with the lower roll numbers but the Catholic Schools Office and the Ministry of Education are very positive the impact of the Housing Redevelopment will soon reach our school with a sharp rise in our roll numbers.

Thank you to all the families who returned the Consultation Survey last week. A special Board committee will be collating the responses as we develop our strategic goals for the next few years. We will continue to have clear achievement and special character goals. There will be a renewed emphasis on increasing Parental Engagement so expect many opportunities to come to school to support learning. We will also be developing a specific Property Goal as the face of the school changes with its intended growth.

Staff Farewells – I need to acknowledge several key members of staff who will not be returning next year. Mr Slade takes up a permanent position at Bailey Road School after spending the last two and a half years with us. He will be particularly missed for his expertise with sports but also for the positive relationships he has built up with so many students and their families. Mrs Mat Kanuta has worked part time as a very skilled Teacher's Aide for many years and will be missed very much. Hopefully, as the roll increases we will be able to attract her back in the future. We also say goodbye to Ella Ringwood and William Tui who have been funded as Part-time Teachers Aides supporting digital learning by the Manaiakalani Trust for the last couple of years while they were university students. We are not sure yet whether we will be able to replace them next year. The whole St Pius X community thanks each of these wonderful individuals and wishes them all the best for next year.

This is my last newsletter for 2015. School starts again on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February. The school office will be open during the morning in the week before school starts.



## Senior Sailing Activities



Our Senior Activities got off to a great start a few weeks ago when all our Year 6 to 8 students had the chance for a days sailing on the beautiful Waitemata Harbour as part of the Volvo Sail NZ Programme. We were very fortunate to receive sponsorship from Rotary Club of Parnell who paid for the experience. The professional instructor was very impressed with the skills of so many of our sailors, particularly in the fact that virtually nobody had sailed before. We were lucky in having two spectacular days with a nice breeze but very calm seas.

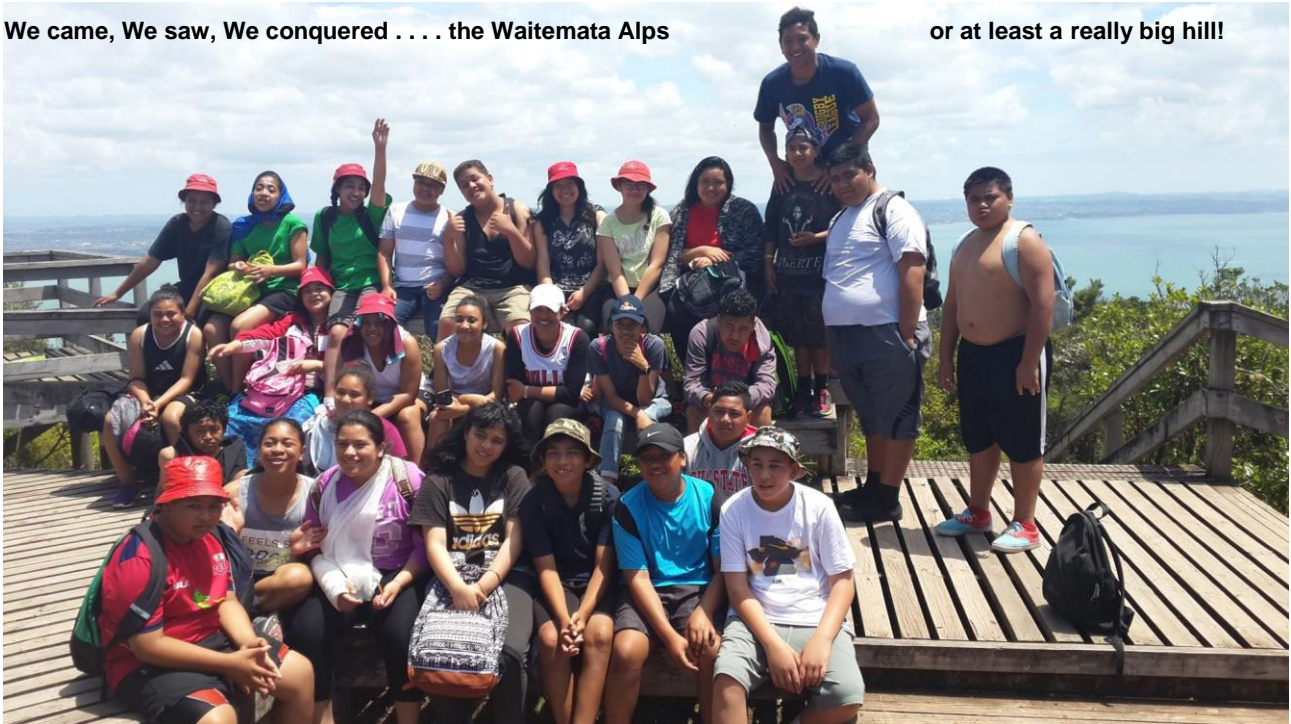
The next challenge we faced was catching the train to Mt Wellington Skateland before climbing the volcano for lunch. Not everybody excelled at skating!





**We came, We saw, We conquered . . . . the Waitemata Alps**

**or at least a really big hill!**



**This is Mt Wellington - Not Rangitoto!**



**Te Rangitira Group Trip to Hobson Walkway to view Sculptures in the park.**



**Manaiakalani Film Festival.**

Some of our junior students at Sylvia Park Movies this term watching the Manaiakalani Film Festival. Each class entered an original movie and were very excited to see themselves on the big screen. Please have a look at all our class movies on line. The children will show you how to find them.

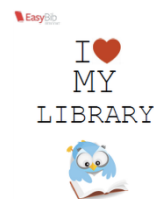
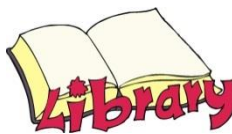
**Graduation Mass is this Friday at 9.30am. All community members are welcome to come and celebrate with our graduating class as they move on to high school next year.**

**Prizegiving this year is on next Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am in the hall. All welcome. Families are invited to have a shared picnic lunch on field from mid-day. We plan to have the water slide open in the afternoon so children will need to bring their togs, a towel and change of clothes.**

**School closes for the year on Tuesday at 12.30pm. Please collect children at this time. The teachers are going out for lunch so nobody will be here after that to supervise.**

### **School Holiday Jobs for Parents**

- 1. Take your child to the library. Help them get a library card if they do not have one. Borrow books to read.**
- 2. Insist your child keeps reading every day.**
- 3. Read to your child as often as you can.**



### **Netbook Contracts**

If your child is in Year 4 now you will need to organise a contract for their new Chromebook for next year. We need to do this as soon as possible so there is no delay in learning at the start of the new year. Likewise, if your older child needs a new chromebook because it is no longer working you will need to make contact with Anita at the Manaia Kalani Trust to sort that as soon as possible. Remember the netbooks that are older than three years are no longer supported so if they break down or break a new contract needs to be started. Please contact me at school if you are not sure.

## **Term 4 2015**

December				
7 Week 9 RE Focus <b>Ear Van</b> at St Pius 7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> Carol Service	8	9 <b>Leavers' Dinner</b>	10	11 <b>Leavers Mass</b> 9.15am
14 Week 10 <b>Prizegiving</b> and <b>School picnic</b> on field afterwards. 10.00am <b>Reports</b> go home	15 <b>Last Day of Term</b> School finishes at <b>12.30pm</b>			