Feast Day Celebration: We had a wonderful day on Tuesday as we prayed, played, baked, ate, sang & danced together. It was great to have a large number of parents visit the school during the day—not only to join in the celebration but to support the activities. We were delighted to welcome staff and Yr 1 students from St James. Our celebrations highlighted our multiculturalism, our Catholicity and the links we are making with St Francis and his spirituality. Importantly, we experienced the joy that is permeating our newly formed community. *As we journey forward, may we all be grateful for the blessings of this year and may we commit to journeying together as a vibrant Catholic learning community marked, like Francis, by our simplicity and our love for one another.*

Welcome to 3 new families as we begin term 4. Cailey Hearn has started in Prep, Abok Athuai has joined Yr 1, and Kathan & Mitra Dave have come into Yr 4 & Yr 6. It is a pleasure to welcome these families into our learning community.

Confirmation Preparation: The Year 6 students are continuing to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This Friday, they will be spending the day with the Year 6 students of St James.

Confirmation parent workshop: Parents you are asked to attend the Confirmation parent workshop, which will be held on Thursday, October 17th at 7.30pm at St James Church. Your attendance at this workshop is an important aspect of being involved in your child’s preparation for the reception of the Sacrament.

Parents in Partnership: Yesterday we had 3 parents attend our evening PIP meeting. We discussed the development of SFA Homework policy. A survey to parents the development of our Homework policy will be sent out to parents next week. There are a number of extra closure days in 2013 and the purpose of these extra closure days was discussed. They are necessary to support the deep level of planning around the teaching and learning that takes place at SFA. A few of our PIP parents have volunteered to attend our Prep 2013 Information session to share their experiences about our first year at St Francis. Our next Fundraiser is currently being organized. This will include the sale of a Foundation Year tea towel. We are also creating a commemorative CD of our first year which will also be for sale.

NEXT MEETING— Wed Nov. 7th. Please attend as this will be a review of our first year as a PIP team.

PE Uniform: For next week only PE will be held on Wednesday. Children should wear their sports uniform on this day rather than Monday.
Summer Uniform and Hats: All children should now have their hat at school every day ready to wear whenever they go outside for sport and play. This is compulsory during term 4 as we abide by the safety rules of the Cancer Council of Australia. Please ensure that your child’s name is clearly marked on their hat and jumpers. It is lovely to see many children now wearing their summer uniform. All children should be in this uniform by Monday 22nd October.

Parish Fair: St James Parish Annual Community Fete is on Saturday 20 October, from 10 am till 4 pm, at 330 Derrimut Road, Hoppers Crossing. Stalls will include crafts, cakes, books, mini mart, pick a box, spinning wheel, Devonshire tea, a variety of food and much more. We will have the Bad Boys ride, Giant slide, Rock Climbing, cup and saucer and jumping castle to keep the kids both young and old amused. There will also be an auction at 1.15pm for the following items: SCA 117 piece tool kit, compressor, gernie, hamper and a cordless drill. Wrist bands will be sold at St. Francis Foyer from Mon Oct 15 to Wed Oct 17 between 8.30am & 9 am. So come along and join us for a day of fun.

STAGE 2 of BUILDING: The slab has been poured, extensive work has been undertaken on the staffroom extension and there is a new paved area in the playground. Work is slightly ahead of schedule at the moment. All good news so far!

A Steering Committee has been formed for the planning of the new school due to open in the Truganina part of the parish in 2015. The members of this committee are:

Fr Jude Pirotta
Jan Keogh
Stephen Murphy
Jean Corr
Lourdes Braganza

Government Funding for Catholic Schools update: Getting a fair funding deal for Catholic schools
Catholic school families are similar to those in government schools. Catholic schools play an important part in some of Victoria’s most disadvantaged communities. Like government schools, Catholic schools also cater for families with middle and high incomes. Catholic school students, on average, receive 20 per cent less government funding than government school students. There is also a significant gap in funding for students with special needs. To make up the difference, you pay fees. Even then, most Catholic schools like ours still operate at around 90 per cent of the cost of education in government schools. As it stands, paying fees is not easy for many Catholic families. If Catholic parents are forced to pay more in fees, it will put a lot of pressure on many families. They may have no option but to move their children to government schools which are already under pressure.

Children not returning to St Francis of Assisi school in 2013 (This does not apply to Yr 6 Students): If your child/children will not be returning to St Francis 2013, could you please complete the slip that has been sent home today and return it to the office as soon as possible. This information will help us plan for next year.

DATES TO REMEMBER:
Oct 12: Confirmation Preparation Day @ St James 7.30pm @ St James
Oct 20: St James Parish Fair
Oct 17: Camp information meeting & Confirmation workshop
Oct 22, 29 Nov 9: Prep 2013 Orientation
Oct 25: Hon. Julia Gillard PM to visit St Francis of Assisi
Oct 26: International Teacher’s Day
Oct 28: Sacrament of Confirmation
Oct 31: Year 5 ‘Mary’ Mass @ SJA
Nov 5: Closure Day (Cup eve)
Nov 6: Melb Cup (public holiday)
Nov 19,20: Closure Days
Nov 21: Prep 2013 Information meeting @SFA
Nov 28-30: Yr 5/6 Camp

Jan Keogh
Principal