***Principal’s Annual Report, P&F AGM 2022***

2022 began with a collective sigh of relief and a feeling of hope as we put 2 years with lockdowns behind us. I, and the staff, expected and prepared for the impact on students, families and staff post lockdown, knowing that there would be a knock on effect for some in terms of learning but more so socially and emotionally. We weren’t as aware of the part mandatory isolation would play in terms of attendance for staff and students or the teacher shortage when it came to replacing staff.

In so many ways, 2022 has been like the phoenix rising from the fire with the return of a number of activities and events. School Band is successfully back in swing with a new program and opportunities run by Teaching Services Australia. A project that received financial support from the P&F. It has been wonderful to hear the sound of music on Mondays during rehearsal and lessons. Band has been an important part of Holy Family for many years. Not being able to run Band on site for 2 years made us realise even more how important it is for many of our children and the positive impact music has on wellbeing. The reformation of the School Choir and the continuation of the Strings Ensemble added to the joy.

‘Pirates versus Mermaids’, our first school musical in a few years, was another milestone of 2022. Musicals don’t just happen, they take time and effort to ensure success. The laughter, song and enjoyment the children brought to the stage certainly entertained the audience and made all the effort worthwhile. Another highlight thanks to the work of staff and support from parents and a reminder of the importance of ‘having fun learning together’.

As was the case in 2021, we were able to hold our Swimming and Athletics Carnivals but this year the children, led by their House Leaders and Seniors, were able to cheer and they certainly made the most of the opportunity.

Over the last few years, parents and carers have endured many hardships and challenges. The P&F and the School Advisory Group have focused on community building and 2022 was no different. My sincere thanks go to the P&F Executive and the Social Committee for their vision and work in supporting and growing the Holy Family community in an inclusive way. Led by our President, Michael Maguire, the P&F did have another goal, to once again hold our iconic Lindfield Art Show and Fair. The purpose was to bring the community together, provide a fun day for our children and include the Parish and local community and they achieved just that.

The desire to look after the wellbeing of our community, children and parents, whilst important, is not the only achievement we should all be thankful for. Through the financial support provided by the P&F, we have been able to arm our teachers with new resources that support the learning, and learning environment of our children. Approximately $30000 towards interactive flat screen classroom monitors allowing us to complete the replacement of the old and tired interactive whiteboards; Over $10000 towards decodable readers that support the new Kindergarten to Year 2 English and Mathematics Syllabus; supporting parents in their difficult job of raising children in this complicated 21st century by organising professional presenters for parent education evenings; $20000 towards the Solar My School project that now sees us producing up to almost 40 Kw of solar power benefitting our budget and our environment.

Thank you to the Executive and the Social Coordinators of the P&F who at the end of this year will all complete their 3 year tenure. Three great years of creative support in very difficult circumstances. It has not gone unnoticed.

The commitment of both the P&F and School Advisory Group is testament to the stewardship and value parents have for Holy Family School. On behalf of myself, the staff and the children, thank you.

It is with thanks to Catholic Schools Broken Bay that we now have a ramp that connects our middle playground to the lower grass area. There are children in our school who were able to access the grass area for the very first time and their joy was precious.

As we come to the end of the 2022 school year, I am again astounded and proud at the way Holy Family staff have risen above the almost daily challenges. I am blessed to have dedicated and hardworking teachers, admin staff, learning support assistants, canteen and our promotions officer. I thank them for their support and care of our students and families and continually improving our wonderful Holy Family School and community. Special thanks to my Leadership Team who have continued to provide wonderful support for me. Support that at times helped to turn my ‘wonderings and dreams’ into reality, such as the very successful ‘Glow and Grow’, and at other times helped me talk my way into understanding that it probably wasn’t the best idea. I especially thank Mrs. Board who as Assistant Principal, colleague and friend, has walked with me through some very challenging and very glorious times. Every Principal needs someone they can trust and be open with and share joys, successes and concerns and I thank Maree for all she has contributed and wish her all the best as she prepares to embark on new challenges.

At the end of 2022 we also farewell Ms. Gokjian, who has secured a permanent position elsewhere, Mrs. Maund, whose temporary contract comes to and end, and Mrs. Forster who has decided to devote more time to family. I thank them for their contributions and wish them well.

Finally, it is with a feeling of sadness that, after 12 years as Principal of this wonderful school and community, this will be the last time I meet formally with the parent community. My sincere thanks to current and past students, families and staff who have supported and encouraged me. They have been my *raison d'etre*, my reason for being, in a vocation I have been privileged to be a part of for 43 years. I thank you one and all and pray that you may all find the Prince of Peace this Christmas.

Lou Dogao