

## STAFF DEVOTION

### EXTRAORDINARY TIMES..... **Matthew 25:35-40 (NIV)**

**35** *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'*

**37** *"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'*

**40** *"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'*

I have heard the expression that these are extraordinary times, and I certainly agree that the last few months during this COVID-19 Pandemic have been anything but ordinary.

I have been very fortunate during this time to hear stories of how our school communities have responded to this extra ordinary time in our history.

School staff have done extra ordinary work as they planned for and lead on-line and/or remote learning, prepared to move back to classroom-based learning, implemented social distancing measures and hygiene processes, cared for students and families via, video conferencing, phone calls and email messages. If these were not extraordinary in and of themselves, I have also heard stories of how our communities have been part of some even more amazing things.

The staff from one school, during the time when most students were learning from home and not really allowed to go out very much, went around to each family and provided students with sports gear and board games to give them something to do when they were not studying. Another school community, working with the canteen staff, provided take-away meals for individuals and families who needed some support.

I am aware of another LEVNT school who organised a drive by for a student who could not celebrate their birthday due to the lockdown restrictions. I understand it also included a cake made by a staff member.

One school family, when offered a reduced fee from the school due to the financial pressures of the COVID-19 crisis, promptly turned around and asked the school to give it to a more needy family, as they were doing okay. I heard of a Principal who drove around to remote families who did not have access to the internet or phones just to check that they were okay.

These are just a few of the amazing ways that our schools have supported our communities, but I am sure that there so many more stories that you have heard or maybe have even been involved in.

The passage above from Matthew's Gospel is a favourite of mine, as it talks specifically about living our faith. It talks about our actions speaking louder than our words. The way that our schools have responded to this pandemic is such a great example of how we live out our faith. In fact, it demonstrates so well our Lutheran Church of Australia's mission statement: "Where Love Comes to Life".

I am so thankful for the amazing work that our school leadership and staff have done and continue to do to be 'extra ordinary' as they support and care for the families in our communities.

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