

St Anthony's School & St Dominic's College

Bike-a-thon 2020



Dear Friends and benefactors,

Each year, St Anthony's School and St Dominic's College, the SSPX school in Whanganui, New Zealand, organises a Bike-a-thon to raise the necessary funds to provide Catholic education to our children, including to some children from Asia. We currently have some boarders from South Korea, Japan and the Philippines. We even had families moving from Asia to live close to the church (on the other side of the street!) and have their children in our school. We currently have 147 students, from year 1 to year 13. The primary is co-educational until year 6, and then the boys and girls are separated in their own campus: the boys are taken care of by the priests and some lay teachers and the girls are taken care of by the Dominican Sisters of Wanganui. Many families go to Mass every day—we have an average above 100 faithful on weekdays—even some children who bike to Mass on their own when their parents can't come. Several children are considering a vocation—please pray for their perseverance.

However, while the spiritual blessings are abundant, our financial situation has always been very short. This is due to the fact that many families have moved here to be close to the Mass and to provide good education to their children, taking a lesser financial situation. Some of our families are struggling, especially when they have many children, and some cannot even pay the low tuition fees which we charge (increasing the fees would not help, since most already give as much as they can.) So we rely on benefactors to be able to pay our teachers and provide the basic necessities to the school, in building maintenance and resources. We currently sorely need a new classroom, because the students are in double-classes in year 7 to 10, and the classroom for them is not big enough: they are really jammed—next year will even be more difficult. Comparing all the options, we need about \$100,000!

Our Bike-a-thon is our main annual fundraising event. For one hour the students, from Junior 1 to form 7, ride their bike in the Whanganui Velodrome: they try to find sponsors that would give 50¢, \$1, \$2, or more per “lap”, i.e. per tour of the velodrome (250m). The older students can ride more than 100 laps in the hour (the record is held by Fr Cranshaw at 146), while the younger ones in J1 do not even reach 10. The idea is that the pledge per lap rewards the effort of the student. Some teachers, including most Sisters and the two Brothers and I myself do run also and can be sponsored. Benefactors can also sponsor a student by making a straight donation on his behalf..

You can visit the site www.bikeathon.nz to see some pictures of our students and of the bike-a-thon event itself. **To support us**, you can either use the online donation system on that site, or you can join together with friends and make a one-time donation (saves on fees), or in Singapore you can make a transfer on my DBS account: 7171 885-074-219-68. It all goes to the school.

The day of the actual biking will be Monday 21st September.

May the Good Lord reward you a hundredfold for all your help, and may the Blessed Virgin Mary obtain most abundant blessing for all of you, and may our patron saints, St Augustine, St Dominic and St Anthony, intercede for you.

Father François Laisney, Prior and principal

Further information can be found at:

www.bikeathon.nz

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Some parents watch their children while the teacher keeps a count of the laps achieved by them.



Even the priests and brothers do bike. Here Brother Vincent



A biker from Singapore