Dear Parents and Carers,

Your child has nominated themselves to participate in the Tournament of the Minds competition for 2016. Tournament of Minds (TOMs) is a problem solving programme for teams of students from both primary and secondary years.

- Teams are required to work together on a **Long Term Challenge** for six weeks without assistance from teachers, parents or peers. They are encouraged to explore possibilities and experiment with ideas as they endeavour to produce their best possible solution. They develop a creative and original way to communicate this solution to others, working within predefined parameters such as limited materials, complex challenge criteria and the deadline of Tournament Day.
- Students present the product of their ideas - their challenge solution - to a panel of judges and an audience on Tournament Day. They have ten minutes in which to present, and must do so within a 3 metre by 3 metre performance area.
- The teams must also participate in an unseen **Spontaneous Challenge** on Tournament Day. This challenge requires rapid interchange of ideas, the ability to think creatively and to demonstrate well developed group cooperation skills.

**Team Membership**

- Each team consists of seven students.
- Primary teams must consist of a mixture of students from at least two primary year levels, with a maximum of four students from any year.
- Only the seven members of each team may work on the challenge during the six weeks prior to Tournament Day.
- There must be no substitution of team members after the Team Nomination has been submitted on the TOMs Portal. If a team member is unable to compete, the team must notify the Tournament Director as soon as possible and continue with only the original remaining members. The minimum number of team members is five.
- All team members registered on Tournament Day are to be involved in both the Long Term Challenge presentation as well as the Spontaneous Challenge.

**What happens now?**

- Each team member will be given a copy of the challenge.
- Each team will work together during supervised lunchtimes or other times as arranged by the team members over the next 5 weeks.
Important Last Notes

- While the majority of preparation for TOMs will occur at school, the needs of each team may vary and teams may require additional preparation time outside of regular school hours. This could be organized, by the parents, for the convenience of team members and hosted at a team member’s house.
- Please notify myself of any sporting or other commitments your child or family has on **Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th September**. If given adequate notice, prior commitments of team members can be catered for in the presentation timetable.
- Please email me at melanie.stratford@cg.catholic.edu.au with your contact details to assist with communication.
- Email contact will be especially essential as we approach the Regional Final date when communication will be more regular.

In my experience the students who participate in Tournament of the Minds develop skills that they can apply to many areas of their life. I look forward to walking this exciting and rewarding journey with your child. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,
Melanie Stratford
5/6 Teacher and TOMs facilitator

______________________________________
I give permission for my child _______________________________ to participate in the 2016 Tournament of the Minds Competition. I confirm that I am available to bring my child to the Australian National University on Saturday 3rd or Sunday 4th September to compete in the competition.

Signed

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