

The last word World Teachers' Day

THE LAST WORD HAS A SCOOP: WORLD TEACHERS' DAY IS COMING, AND IT'S ON A FRIDAY, AFTER THURSDAY'S FINANCE AND MATERIAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING AND BEFORE YOUR SATURDAY MORNING SPORT COMMITMENTS. PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY.

IF YOU FEAR YOU'LL MISS WORLD Teachers' Day on the first Friday in October this year because it's during the term break – except in Tasmania, where Term 3 has been going since September and Term 4 doesn't go at all – fear not.

World Teachers' Day in Australia is celebrated on the *last* Friday in October, when all schools are into Term 4, except in Tasmania, where Term 3 has been going since September and Term 4 doesn't go at all, so put a reminder note in your diary – it's on 31 October.

Move over Robert Donat in *Goodbye, Mr Chips*, Maggie Smith in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, Sidney Poitier in *To Sir, With Love*, Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society*, Michelle Pfeiffer in *Dangerous Minds*, Jim Belushi in *The Principal*, Meryl Streep in *Music of the Heart* and even

Antonio Banderas in *Take the Lead*. On World Teachers' Day, *you're* the one to thank, the one who saves the day every day with heroic, missionary zeal.

Actually, World Teachers' Day provides us with the opportunity to thank all our teachers, whether they're superheroes, plain heroes, not especially heroic or decidedly unheroic, for the vital work they do each day in our schools – and even to thank all our teachers for the routine and humdrum work they do in our schools, like collecting the staffroom milk money and buying milk every morning – one fullcream, one lowfat, two skim milk and one soy, except on Fridays when it's just one fullcream, one lowfat and one skim milk; and taking yard duty, even if it's every other day, and actually asking Tommy Parnassus to pick up that lolly wrapper he dropped; and com-

pleting innumerable different forms, evaluations, assessments, surveys and reports as required by lots of different statutory and regulatory bodies for lots of different statutory and regulatory reasons; and opting to renew your first aid certificate *on a Saturday*; and mentoring Sonja Onya, who's new on staff this term; and throwing together a PowerPoint presentation on mentoring for the after-school meeting of the district mentor support group; and sitting on the lunchtime finance and material resources committee, and even agreeing to take the minutes; and making the costume for Caldwell B. Cladwell in this year's production of *Urinetown: The musical*; and working backstage; and covering yet another extra substitute class, especially considering it's 7B and especially since it's period five on the last Friday in October; and taking this week's Friday detentions; and *even* collecting the filthy staffroom teatowels that look like offcuts from the Shroud of Turin and actually taking them home, and washing and ironing them.

Thanks.

Mind you, if you could give Sonja Onya a lift home after tonight's staff meeting since her car's at the mechanic, that'd be great.

Thanks a lot.

And the coach company can't get the team to cross-country on Saturday and of course you have a bus driver's licence, so would that be okay? It's a 7:00am pick up.

Thank you.

And we really need your help on the Friday lunchtime World Teachers' Day planning committee. It's important that we plan to thank all our teachers for the vital work they do each day in our schools.

It's on 31 October.

Ta. **T**

This month's Last Word was written by Steve Holden, Editor of Teacher.

Pictured, a typical teatowel from an Australian school staffroom, or the Shroud of Turin, maybe.