



Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School,

2015 Easter Celebration

On Monday as part of our 2015 Easter Celebration the St Mary MacKillop School Community participated in Stations of the Cross Family liturgies. The liturgies reminded us that we have entered a commemorative week in the life of Christ. The first day promised so much and what followed was certainly not the way his friends would have expected nor wanted.

Holy Week commences with Jesus' grand entry into Jerusalem where he is welcomed with such enthusiasm by a large crowd, who lay palm branches on the ground before him. By week's end that crowd was no longer there for Jesus; only a few women, together with Mary and John, were gathered under the cross.

On the Thursday evening at the Last Supper, Jesus tells his Apostles and more directly Peter, that their loyalty will be tested very soon. Peter's response to such a suggestion is, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you and to die with you!" Luke 22:33. Jesus' reply to Peter is very matter of fact: "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow tonight until you have said three times that you do not know me." Luke 22:34.

We all know that later in the night, when the pressure came onto Peter and he was accused of knowing Jesus, Peter denied it, "I don't even know him." Luke 22:57. Two more denials followed and towards the end of the third denial, "While he was still speaking, a rooster crowed." Luke 22:60.

The remainder of Friday was a total disaster for the Apostles and other followers. Last Sunday's triumph was now Friday's disaster and Jesus seemed to offer neither resistance nor defence of himself. "For my part I made no resistance, Neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, My cheeks to those who tore at my beard. I did not cover my face against insult and spittle." Isaiah 50:5, 6. 8th Century B.C.

By mid-afternoon, Jesus was executed in the manner reserved for criminals, deserted by the crowd and by those who had been so close to him for the past three years. "They tear holes in my hands and my feet, I can count every one of my bones. They divide my clothing among them, they cast lots for my robes." Psalm 22:16 – 18.

Mel Gibson, in his movie, "The passion of Christ", chose the crucifixion scene to symbolise that we all had a part in Jesus' death, not just a few Jewish leaders or the Roman soldiers in charge of the execution. Likewise, it could be said that Peter symbolises our denials of Jesus, when we make bad choices and engage in inappropriate behaviours.

Have there been time when we celebrate and welcome Christ, when we turn away from Christ and, In a manner of speaking, we are all part of Sunday's crowd: we are in the "crowd" that receives First Communion, we are in the "crowd" that receives Confirmation; but, when we are separated from the crowd, are we any good at sticking by Jesus? Maybe food for thought as Holy Week is with us.

Catholic Ethos in our Schools

Recently an opinion piece appeared in The Australian newspaper on 26 March, from Tony Farley of the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations. The piece is in response to the ongoing campaign from the Independent Education Union and the Greens party to abolish the freedom that faith-based schools have to employ people who will act in accordance with the beliefs and teachings of their religion.

You may have heard about the inclusion of a Catholic ethos clause as a key issue within the current Enterprise Agreement for teachers. Current legislation allows Catholic and other faith-based schools to require that staff support the mission, teaching and values of our faith in schools. To remove this ability seeks to remove the religious nature our Catholic schools - the very reason why our schools exist.



These arrangements allow us the freedom to run our schools in a way that expresses our faith and provides parents with the ability to have their children educated in an environment that is consistent with their family's beliefs and values.

The ongoing negotiations for an Enterprise Agreement for teachers have canvassed a range of issues, which employers will shortly be seeking to settle with the IEU. The issue of Catholic ethos is one that is fundamental to the future of our schools.

Thankyou:

Sincere thanks to Miss Tara Ryan for teaching the children in 3W during Term One. A very warm welcome back to Mrs Ros Wheaton who took Long Service Leave and a well earned rest during Term One.

Reminder:

I would like to draw your attention to a number of reminders:

- Children return to school for Term 2 in winter uniform
- Enrolments are open for Kindergarten 2016. Enrolments will continue until 29 May, 2015.

Thought for the Week

*You should sit in meditation for 20 minutes a day,
Unless you're too busy....then you should sit for an hour.
Old Zen Saying*

Congratulations on a great term of learning and wishing all the SMMK community a safe and Sacred Easter Holiday. Wishing you a Very Happy Easter that is filled with love and happiness

Peace and best wishes

Mr Michael Siciliano
PRINCIPAL

Numeracy Workshop

Thank you to the many parents who attended the repeat Numeracy Workshop on Tuesday evening. It was great to see such interest and enthusiasm from our parent community, engaging in rich tasks that highlight the teaching and learning that happens at St Mary MacKillop. The parents played the 'games' that the children play in class and were informed about the specific purpose of the Maths Assessment Interview and the links to numeracy growth points. Special thanks to Miss McNally, Mrs Rowan and Mrs Aliberti who co-presented with me. Future workshops will be proposed if parents feel they would like to learn more about how you can help your children at home with mathematics.



Asian Fair Day

Congratulations to our Stage 3 children for all the effort that went into the Asian Fair Day. It was wonderful to see so much learning taking place and such enthusiasm from the students in presenting their 'country'. We also had an amazing number of parents who visited the school to walk through our Stage 3 classrooms. This support for our students and their learning is much appreciated.



Religious Education News

Holy Week is the last week of Lent and began last Sunday with Palm Sunday. We entered into this week knowing that it is a week made "holy" forever by the self surrendering love of Jesus - for us all. All week, we remember how he loved us. Whatever we do, no matter how busy or "distracted" we might be; we can let the power of this week be in the background of our daily reflections. He entered into our life - with its profound joys and its punishing evils - that we might never experience those struggles alone. So no matter what we experience this week, we can let it become a "holy" week, letting it all be touched by the graces of this week. From the humble, yet triumphant, entry into Jerusalem, to our standing together at the foot of his cross, this can be a week which helps us bring all of the elements of our lives, all our experiences of sin and death, into the font of his redeeming, liberating resurrection.



Palm Sunday - Observes the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that was marked by the crowds who were in Jerusalem for Passover waving palm branches and proclaiming him as the king. This Sunday is also known as Passion Sunday to commemorate the beginning of Holy Week and Jesus' final agonising journey to the cross.

Holy Thursday - There are a variety of events that are clustered on this last day before Jesus was arrested. These include Jesus' and disciples last meal together, the institution of Eucharist, the betrayal by Judas and Jesus praying in Gethsemane while the disciples fell asleep.

Good Friday - On this day, we remember Jesus' arrest, his trial, suffering, crucifixion, death, and burial. Since services on this day are to observe Jesus' death, and since Eucharist is a celebration, there is traditionally no Communion observed on Good Friday.

Easter Sunday - On Easter Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of the Lord, Jesus Christ who was raised from the dead, three days after his death on the cross. Through his death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus paid the penalty for sin, thus purchasing for all who believe in him, eternal life in Christ Jesus.

May everyone have a happy, Holy and peaceful Easter

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Congratulations to the following students who made their First Reconciliation on either Tuesday 17 and Wednesday 18 or Saturday 21 March.

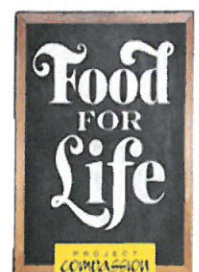
Brayden A, Reyce A, Jorja B, Tayla B, Georgia B, Mikayla C, Trinity D, Romy E, Liam E, Isabella F, Kate F, Emily F, Ilaria G, Vashti G, Ashleigh G, Judith G, Georgia G, Emilia G, Bryce H, Amy J, Brianna K, Kalinda K, Alic L, Ella L, Lachlan L, Amelia M, Lincoln Mc, Jake Mc, Emily Mc, Joshua M, Jayden M, Jordon N, Whyte O, Ava O, Angelica P, Lily P, Peony P, Olivia R, Kyle R, Chontelle R, Grace R, William S, Lachlan S, Taylor T, Kaden V, Matilda V, Emily W, Noah W, Tori W, Elle W and Xavier X

Project Compassion:

Project Compassion, our first Social Justice Initiative for the year, came to an end on Wednesday and so far our school community has given generously to raise over \$700 for Project Compassion. This is a fantastic effort and the money will really help those most in need in our world.



Caritas Australia would like to THANK YOU for supporting Project Compassion. Your donation will provide much needed support for programs around the world that provide vulnerable people with the skills and opportunities they need to establish sustainable food sources for life. www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion 1800 024 413



At the beginning of next term, once all monies have been finalised, I will announce the exact amount raised.

Mrs Leesa Gillard
Religious Education Coordinator

PRC News - 25 May 2015, 7:00pm - Patrician Brothers College, 100 Flushcombe Rd, Blacktown

Do you want to know more about Personalised Learning Plans and how they support students with a disability? Shane Morris, Project Leader - System Learning, Student Services, Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta will highlight why personalised plans need to be in place for students with a disability. He hopes to answer questions such as: Whether your child with a disability requires a personalised plan? Do you want to find out more about the collaboration process and how it informs the plan? What makes a personalised plan successful? **Contact:** Parents, Representative Council, Parramatta Diocese.

Email: preparrasecretary@gmail.com

Zooper Dooper Sales:

Thank you to all the parent helpers for your assistance during Term 1 in selling Zooper Doopers to our beautiful children. We humbly appreciate everything you do.

Donations of 2nd Hand Uniforms "PAY IT FORWARD" - If anyone has old uniforms that are no longer being worn, please consider donating these items to the school 2nd hand uniform shop. Your contribution not only helps families purchase and upgrade their children's uniforms, but also money raised from the sales provides funds to support families experiencing financial hardship. Pay it Forward my friends and the positivity will only circulate your way again. Thank you for your support.

School Holiday Activity Ideas: - During the holidays the following events are taking place, why not enjoy these holidays by going to: The Royal Easter Show, iFly Down Under (Mulgoa Road), Flipout or AMF Bowling (Batt Street), **Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest** school holiday activities

<http://www.penrithregionalgallery.org/whats-on/calendar/>,

Penrith Working Truck Show <http://www.pwts.com.au/main.html>,

Kids in the Park activities http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/whats_on/kids_in_the_park,

Penrith City Library school holiday activities: <https://www.facebook.com/penrith.city.library>.

Voices in the Valley @ The Joan: <http://thejoan.com.au/whats-on/>.

Enrol your children in drama workshops with '**Kids Can Act Drama School**' which provides skills in building confidence in acting and voice techniques: www.kidscanact.com.au.

Poppy Park Penrith - Lest We Forget 100 Years anniversary.

Poppy Park at Judges Park, Woodriff Street Penrith on display from 21 March - 29 April:

<https://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/What-s-On/EventCategory/Exhibitions-and-expos/Poppy-Park/>, We highly commend St Mary MacKillop Primary School for purchasing 14 poppies for this good cause - The P & F purchased 1 poppy on behalf of each class at SMMPS. The poppies purchased will be on display at Poppy Park until 29 April and then they will be delivered to our school by June, then distributed to each classroom as a sentimental reminder of the 14 fallen soldiers that we represented at Poppy Park in 2015. Make sure you take the family over there before the park closes. LEST WE FORGET.

First term is already over, and the holiest Christian celebration of the year is nigh. Please take this time to spend every precious moment you have with your loved ones and enjoy each others presence in this fast tracked (and sometimes unpredictable) world we live in. Each and every one of our children are priceless gifts that are irreplaceable. BE SAFE, be kind, be gentle, be peaceful and be grateful with love and faith in your hearts and we look forward to seeing you all in Term 2. HAPPY EASTER.

God bless

Liz Whalen—On behalf of the P & F Executive Team

Sppeial Thanks - The Woodburn family would like to thank all of those families from Year 2 and Year 4, 2014 for the very kind and generous hamper you gave to our family around Christmas time last year. The love, support and kindness you have given to our family, means so much to us all. Words cannot express how much the gifts you gave us have helped us through some very tough days and we appreciate each and every one of you for your thoughts, prayers and kindness.

Much love and appreciation,

Lee, Matthew, Billy and Elle Woodburn

Dates for Your Diary Term 1 - 2015

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Thursday	2 April		Staff Development Day—Pupil Free Day Holy Thursday - End of Term 1
Friday	3 April		Good Friday

Dates for Your Diary Term 2 - 2015

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Monday	20 April		Term 2 Commences
Friday	24 April	9:15am	Resurrection/ANZAC Day Prayer
Friday	1 May	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly & 6M Item
Tuesday	5 May	7:00pm	Diocesan Cross Country @ Eastern Creek First Communion Parent Meeting @ St Nicholas
Friday	8 May	TBA	Mother's Day Liturgy
Tuesday	12 May	7:30pm	Year 4 Old Government House Excursion NAPLAN Years 3 & 5 P&F Executive Meeting
Wednesday	13 May		NAPLAN Years 3 & 5
Thursday	14 May		NAPLAN Years 3 & 5
Friday	15 May	9:15am 2:20pm	Kindergarten Liturgy Whole School Assembly & 2A Item
Friday	22 May	9:15am 2:20pm 3:45pm	Year 4 Grade Mass Whole School Assembly & 1J Item Communion Church Tour
Tuesday	26 May	7:30pm	School Photos—Full Winter School Uniform P&F General Meeting
Friday	5 June		Staff Development Day—Pupil Free Day
Monday	8 June		Queen's Birthday Long Weekend
Tuesday	9 June		Primary Athletics Carnival @ Blair Oval St Marys
Friday	12 June	TBA 3:45pm	Whole School Mass-The Sacred Heart of Jesus NSWCPA & CCC Cross Country @ Eastern Creek First Communion Practice
Monday	15 June	3:30-7:00pm	ICAS Writing Competition Parent/Teacher Interviews
Tuesday	16 June	7:00pm	ICAS Spelling Competition Combined Captivate Choir @ Nagle College
Wednesday	17 June	3:30-6:00pm	Parent/Teacher Interviews
Thursday	18 June	7:00pm	Combined Captivate Choir @ Nagle College
Friday	19 June		Year 5 Excursion to St Mary MacKillop Place