



Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School,

19 March is the feast day of St Joseph

Today is the feast day of St Joseph and with this in mind I share a prayer that we can offer up to the Spouse of our most holy mother.

A Special Prayer to St. Joseph

*O Saint Joseph, whose protection is so great,
so strong, so prompt before the throne of God,
I place in you all my interests and desires.*

*O Saint Joseph, assist me by your powerful intercession
and obtain for me from your Divine Son
all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ,*

*Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your heavenly power,
I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of Fathers.*

*O Saint Joseph, I never weary contemplating you
and Jesus asleep in your arms;*

I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart.

Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me,

and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath, Amen.

O Saint Joseph, hear my prayers and obtain my petitions.

O Saint Joseph, pray for me. Amen

Is my child ready for school?

As you are aware Kinder 2016 enrolments are now open at St Mary MacKillop. Children, who turn five years old on or before 31 July, are eligible for enrolment in kindergarten that year. However, even if your child is the right age, there are some other factors you might like to consider.

- Language Skills- to thrive at school your child needs to be able to communicate with teachers and other students and be able to focus on tasks, accept direction and instructions from teachers.
- Motor skills and coordination- your child needs coordination to use a pencil, scissors and perform other skills in kindergarten.
- Concentration and emotional maturity- your child should be comfortable with the social aspects of school including playing and cooperating with other children.
- Independence- children at school need to be able to function with less supervision and help from adults than pre-schoolers when performing tasks such as toileting, eating and dressing.

Physical wellbeing- children who have a chronic illness, disability or other needs may have difficulty with some aspects of school. This does not mean that they are not ready for school, but their physical and functional requirements will need to be considered and a plan put in place before the child commences. For more information about enrolments for Kindergarten 2016 please come along to our information session, on Monday 23 March, 7pm in the hall, where you will hear from many members of our SMMK community.

Bullying-No Way!

Bullying No Way The fifth National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence will be held on Friday, 20 March 2015. This annual day promotes the everyday message that bullying and violence have no place in our schools or the society in which we live. At St Mary MacKillop, we continue to promote the message 'Bullying is not OK. Everyone has the right to be safe and to be respected.' We are very fortunate at St Mary MacKillop that incidences of bullying are not common in our school and we will continue our proactive Restorative Justice approach to ensure this remains the case. As parents, it is important that we are available to our children to listen to them and to ask questions to see if bullying is a problem for them. If you see a change in behaviour or attitude over a period of time in your child, this may be an indicator that they are a victim of bullying. We pride ourselves in providing a safe school environment for all our students and we will always act to prevent bullying and to address any issues that may arise quickly. If you are concerned about your child's safety, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher to have the situation addressed immediately.

State Election:

With less than two weeks before the state election, I urge you to contact your local MPs and candidates to talk to them about the importance of capital works funding for Catholic schools in western Sydney. Without capital works funding for Catholic schools, it will be difficult to meet growing enrolment demands for Catholic schooling. This will place an even greater burden on the tax payer if places for these children need to be found in government schools. Recently, our Executive Director of Schools, Greg Whitby met with Minister Adrian Piccoli to urge him to consider the needs of the 25% of children and young people who attend Catholic schools in western Sydney. Although the meeting was positive, no commitment to capital works funding was made. I urge you to email your local STATE member, Stuart Ayres (Penrith@nsw.liberal.org.au), and STATE opposition candidate, Emma Husar (emma.husar@nswlabor.org.au), to tell them that capital works funding is an important issue for you in the upcoming election.

National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy 2015:

In May 2015 the National Assessment program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) will be completed by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN has the support of all State and territory Education Ministers and will assess the literacy and numeracy skills of students across Australian schools. The results of the test will provide important information to schools about what each student can do, and will be used to support teaching and learning programs. Parents will receive a report indicating their child's level of achievement. Each student's level of achievement will be reported against the national minimum standard.

Student background information (student name, gender, date of birth, language background and Aboriginality) will be collected as part of the National Assessment Program. This information is treated confidentially and held securely to ensure that every student's right to privacy is maintained. The NAPLAN tests will be conducted from 12-14 May 2015.

TUESDAY 12 MAY	WEDNESDAY 13 MAY	THURSDAY 14 MAY
Language Conventions (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) Writing	Reading	Numeracy

In the Numeracy tests students do not require any measuring tools such as rulers or protractors. In Year 7 and 9 there will be two Numeracy tests: one where a calculator is allowed and one where calculators are not to be used. For the calculator test, the student should use the calculator that they currently use at school.

Friday 15 May—A 'catch-up' day is scheduled for students who missed a test or were absent on a test day. Students may be considered for exemption from the tests if they:

- Are newly arrived in Australia (less than one year before the test) and with a language background other than English, or
- Have significant intellectual disability and/or significant co-existing conditions which severely limit their capacity to participate in the tests.

All other students are expected to participate in the tests. Disability adjustments which reflect the student's normal level of support in the classroom may be provided. Large print, Braille, coloured paper versions and electronic tests are available to meet the needs of individual students.

Access to disability adjustment or exemption from the tests must be discussed with the school principal and a parent or carer consent form must be signed. Students may be withdrawn from NAPLAN by their parent or carer. This is a matter for consideration by parents in consultation with the Principal. If you wish to withdraw your child from the tests, a parent or carer consent form must be signed.

Please make an appointment with the principal of the school your child attends if you would like to discuss your child's participation of NAPLAN. Additional information about NAPLAN can be found at www.nap.edu.au/NAPLAN/Parent/Carer_support/index.html

Thought for the Week
"In St Joseph's care I leave you"
Mary MacKillop-1873

Have a Blessed Week

Michael Siciliano

Religious Education News

The Season of Lent:

As we move closer towards the end of Lent it is the opportune time to reflect on our personal preparation for the resurrection of Christ at Easter. We ask ourselves: Are we growing in our relationship with God through regular prayer and works of love? We acknowledge that we are human and make wrong choices, but are comforted by the knowledge that we are unconditionally loved by God. I offer you a little recipe to help you through the last few weeks of the season of Lent.

A Recipe for a Lenten Garden:

First plant five rows of peas - *preparedness - promptness - perseverance - politeness-prayer.*

Next plant three rows of squash - *squash gossip - squash criticism - squash indifference.*

Then plant four rows of lettuce - *let us be loyal - let us be unselfish - let us be truthful - let us be faithful.*

No garden is complete without turnips - *turn up for mass - turn up with a smile - turn up with a new idea - turn up with real determination.*

Then see what a wonderful garden you can grow!



Project Compassion

Our first Social Justice Initiative for the year is well underway. The Children are giving generously and have currently raised \$626.65 for this important outreach cause – Well done! Please remember that we have a few weeks of donation time left.

Project Compassion, Week 5, brings you the story of Cristian from Peru.

Harvesting Food For Life: Cristian's community in rural Peru has always lived a traditional life, with simple diets and crops dependent on rainfall. Until recently, 33 year old Cristian had to travel one kilometre to access running water. With the help of Caritas Huacho, Cristian and 14 other young farmers have introduced running water and irrigation to their remote Andean village. They now grow and harvest a wide variety of high-value, sustainable crops, which provide them all with a secure income and a wide variety of food. Your donation to Project Compassion 2015 helps farmers in Peru secure a food source and income that benefits their families and communities for life.



Project Compassion, Week 6, brings you the story of Vinsen from Indonesia

Sustainable Food For Life: Until recently, the weather in Vinsen's small farming village in West Timor has been quite stable. However, in the last few years changing weather patterns have made harvests unpredictable and unprofitable. To combat the variable weather patterns affecting farmers in Vinsen's village in Indonesia, a local community program supported by Caritas Australia, is teaching farmers how to terrace land and grow sustainable crops for life – regardless of the changing weather. Your donation to Project Compassion 2015 helps farmers in remote West Timor create a life-long source of food, improving the future wellbeing of their families and communities. www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion 1800 024 413



2015 Religious Education Implementation Plan—Prayer:

As mentioned in the last KIT, one of our 2015 school goals is to explore and use a variety of prayer forms to continue to develop the communities (students, staff and parents) relationship with God. As a Catholic school, our community regularly participates in masses, liturgies and formal and spontaneous prayer.

Our commitment to our school goal has been further enhanced by; our praying of the Angelus at 12:00pm everyday and Friday Whole School Prayer time at 2pm. These uninterrupted, sacred times allow the teachers and students to pray together and most importantly the children are taught about prayer to further develop their skills and knowledge of the structure of various prayer forms. **Prayer nourishes our faith and a rich variety of prayer allows us to grow and not become stagnate.**

During class and whole school prayer time the teachers and students will be exploring the following types of prayer:

- Traditional prayer
- Scripture prayer
- Prayers from Mass
- Meditative prayer (guided and scriptural)
- Centering prayer
- Creative prayer
- Reflective prayer
- Hymns / music / liturgical movement

Over the coming weeks both the children and myself will be sharing with you information about each of these types of prayers. **Through varying the style of prayer the students are exposed to, we are aiming to develop, within the children, a deeper and more personal relationship with God.**

I leave the following quote from Mother Teresa with you:

*Prayer is not asking.
Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God,
at his disposition,
and listening to his voice in the depths of our hearts.*



Easter Celebration: Stations of the Cross

This year to celebrate Easter, the most important liturgical season of the church year, the St Mary MacKillop community will participate in a ***Stations of the Cross Family Prayer*** on Monday 30 March. The children will be divided into family groups and will be led through the Stations of the Cross by a teacher. Parents are warmly invited to share this special preparation for Easter with their child(ren). A more detailed note will be sent home next week.

Mrs Leesa Gillard

Religious Education Coordinator

Numeracy Workshop

Recently a number of parents attended a numeracy workshop facilitated by several St Mary MacKillop staff members. The content of the workshop was relevant for any parent of children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The parents had the opportunity to experience the various games and activities that happen each day in all our classrooms, and explicit links were made to growth Points collected from the Maths Assessment Interview. The feedback from the parents who attend this session was overwhelmingly positive. Several enquiries were made about the possibility of having an evening session. Therefore, depending on parent interest, another workshop has been scheduled for Tuesday evening 31 March from 6:30pm—8:30pm.

Please note that this workshop will only go ahead if sufficient parents RSVP. Therefore if you are able to attend, please contact the school office either by email at marymackillop@parra.catholic.edu.au or phone the office on 4736 3466 by next Thursday 26 March 2015.

Parents who indicate they would like to come will be contacted the next day on Friday 27 March confirming whether the workshop will go ahead. All participants will receive a resource folder containing templates of the activities that will be explained during the workshop.

Monash University Project:

Year 5 and 6 students and teachers from our school will be participating in a project in conjunction with several other schools within the Parramatta Diocese. The Maths project is led by Professor Peter Sullivan, an accomplished author on designing 'problem solving' maths tasks that elicit deep thinking within the students. The project entails our Year 5 and 6 students completing a lengthy unit of work focussing on children's understanding of fractions, using rich open-ended type tasks. The Stage 3 students will be asked to complete an online survey at the beginning of the unit of work, and again at the end. The survey allows the children to reflect on their learning. Parents of Stage 3 students will shortly receive more detailed information about our schools involvement in this project.

P & F Executive Team 2015 - Update:

It gives me great pleasure to announce the OFFICIAL (with all positions filled) St Mary MacKillop P & F Executive Team for 2015 as follows:

- President: Liz Whalen
- Vice President: Michelle Darwen
- Secretary: Jenny Inskip
- Treasurer: Fiona Bryant
- Fundraising Team: Wendy Attard and Cecily Ellston
- PRC Rep: Rebecca Moxey and Tracey McGuiness
- Major Fundraising (TRIVIA NIGHT): Jade Billington
- Fundraising/Maintenance: Joanne Groger and Michelle Pearman

Thank you so much for taking on these positions for 2015 as your valuable contribution will assist our school with wonderful events for all to enjoy.

Class Parent Representatives 2015 - Nominations complete & Congratulations:

Please be advised that we are fortunate to have the following parents nominated as the class parent representatives for your class. If you have any general questions relating to volunteering or assemblies or any ideas you wish to share at the P & F meetings, please do not hesitate to contact these wonderful parents. Please ensure that all personal or academic questions are directed to your child's teacher or Grade Co-ordinator as Class Parent Representatives are there as your voice at the meetings and not to solve personal or academic issues. Notes should have been distributed to each grade by now advising of your class parent representative, this includes: KA - Karen Cutts, KH - Jade Billington, 1J - Cecily Ellston, 1R - Wil Thomas, 2A - Fiona Bryant, 2M - Michelle Darwen, 3M - Wendy Attard, 3W - Susie Jameson, 4BL and 4M - Alice Dardaneliotis, 5G - Jenny Inskip, 5M - Liz Whalen, 6M - Wendy Attard and 6PM - Karen Hooper. Thank you kindly to all the parents that stepped forward to volunteer their time for this position.

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 like:

- 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:** prcparrasecretary@gmail.com

Zooper Dooper Sales:

Zooper Doopers sales will be taking place every Wednesday and Friday till the end of term 1. Prices for Zooper Doopers are 60c for a full / 30c for a half. Thank you to all the parent helpers, your assistance is always appreciated.

Next school uniform SALE will take place on Wednesday, 25 March from 2:00pm to 2:45pm. \$5 for a bag of clothes. Don't miss out on a bargain to update your children's uniform.

Road Traffic and Maritime Laws - NO PARKING sign:

Parents, please be aware that the 'NO PARKING' sign just before the bus bay may cause you grief financially if you do not abide by the road traffic laws. The 'NO PARKING' sign means "You must not stop for more than two minutes in a No Parking area. You must remain in or within three metres of the vehicle. Hours of operations may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only. Mobility Parking Permit holders are allowed to park for up to five minutes. Please be advised that fines do apply and the police monitor this area often on Fragar Road. If you wish to read more about parking signs, the website to visit is <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roads/safety-rules/road-rules/parking.html>.

God Bless

Liz Whalen - President on behalf of the P & F Executive Team

Dates for Your Diary Term 1 - 2015

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Saturday	21 March	11:00am	First Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Friday	20 March	9:15am 2:20pm	Year 2 Grade Liturgy NSWCPS Swimming Trials @ Homebush Whole School Assembly & 6PM Assembly Item
Monday	23 March	7:00pm	Year 6 Young Leaders Day 2016 Kindergarten Parent Information Evening
Friday	27 March	9:15 2:20pm	Year 3 Grade Liturgy Whole School Assembly & 5M Item
Monday	30 March	TBA	Easter Celebration: Stations of the Cross
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
Monday	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