



Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School,

2014 NSW Premiers Readers Challenge:

Last year many children from St Mary MacKillop participated in the Premiers Readers Challenge. Once again this year I encourage all our students to pursue their love of reading for leisure, pleasure and learning by participating in the 2014 Premiers Readers Challenge. The Reading Challenge commences 3 March and concludes on the 22 August 2014. For more useful information about the challenge go to the following website:

www.premiersreadingchallenge.nsw.edu.au

More Than a Great Education:

This year St Mary MacKillop will join Catholic Schools across NSW and the ACT to celebrate Catholic Schools Week from 9-15 March. The theme for CSW 2014 is 'more than a great education' which encourages schools to showcase for the community what's happening in our classrooms. Check the diary section of our newsletter for the date and times of the SMMK Catholic Schools Week events which include: Liturgy, open classrooms, Restorative Practice Parent Information session, Captivate Orchestra performance and school cross country.

Prayer for Catholic Schools Week:

Catholic Schools Week is a special time when we celebrate the extraordinary achievements of our Catholic Schools.

It is a time when we give thanks for the wonderful teaching and learning that takes place every day in every classroom.

We pray for all who work in the service of Catholic Education who create the opportunities for children to grow and thrive.

Amen

St Nicholas of Myra Celebrating 175 Years Anniversary(1939-2014):

This Sunday 22 February the SMMK choir will participate in the 175 year anniversary of St Nicholas of Myra Parish. Here are a few interesting historical facts about our Parish:

- The foundation stone of the first St Nicholas Church was laid by Archbishop Polding on 9 December, 1839.
- The first priest in Penrith was Reverend Charles Sumner.
- The first St Nicholas' Church was consecrated by Archbishop Polding on 13 November, 1850.
- Before the current presbytery was built, the Priests stayed with Catholic families in the area.
- The current presbytery was opened on 27 November 1932.
- The present St Nicholas of Myra Church was officially opened and blessed by Cardinal Gilroy on 30 April, 1967 .
- Over the years the Parish of Penrith has given birth to other thriving parish communities such as Kingswood (1970); Emu Plains (1974); Cranebrook (1992) and more recently Glenmore Park Catholic community.
- The first school was located on the site of the present presbytery. It operated from 1862 to 1880.
- In 1880, the Sisters of St Joseph opened the St Joseph 's School, situated in Evans St (between High and Henry Streets). It was the first school opened by the Sisters of St Joseph.
- In 1954, the school closed as a parish school when St Nicholas of Myra Primary School opened.
- Over the years the Parish has contributed to the establishment of St Nicholas of Myra Primary, Mary MacKillop Primary at Penrith South, Caroline Chisholm College at Glenmore Park , Corpus Christi Primary at Cranebrook, Bethany Primary at Glenmore Park, and McCarthy High School at Emu Plains.

I am looking forward to celebrating this special occasion with the community on Sunday.

Mr Michael Siciliano
 PRINCIPAL



From the Assistant Principal

NRL Tackles Bullying:

On Monday 24 February, Years 3-6 will be visited by the Penrith Panthers NRL players to address the issue of bullying in schools. They will show a short video and talk to the children about the importance of preventing bullying in schools.

Mathletics:

All children in the primary grades have now been issued with their Mathletics log in details. The children are encouraged to log in at home and explore the Mathletics site. If your child does not know their log in details, please contact Mr Cauchi.

Literacy Parent Workshop:

An invitation is extended to all parents to attend the Literacy Parent Workshop (K-6 focus) next Wednesday in the library from 2.00-3.00pm. Mrs Devlin will lead the parents in effective strategies in teaching and assessing reading and comprehension. This will be a very worthwhile learning opportunity for parents, regardless of the age of your child. I Look forward to seeing you there on Wednesday. Throughout the year, we will endeavour to lead other parent workshops as the need arises. A numeracy workshop is scheduled for later in the year.

ICAS Competitions

Earlier this week, children in Years 3-6 would have brought home information about the University of NSW ICAS (International Competitions And Assessments For Schools) tests. At St Mary MacKillop, we provide opportunities for the children to participate in Science, English, Writing and Mathematics. There is a cost associated with each of these assessments, which is used to cover the printing of the material, the marking and the certificate that all children receive. Please complete and return the slip indicating which test(s) your child will be participating in. Please be aware that these tests are voluntary and quite challenging. A hard copy of the results will be provided through the school approximately six weeks after the test sitting date.

Mr Steve Cauchi
Assistant Principal

Religious Education News

Opening School Mass:

Please join us for our Opening School Mass in our Multi Purpose Hall tomorrow, Friday 21 February, at 9:15am. At our mass we will gather as a school community to pray for God's blessing on the school year. Looking forward to seeing you there as we celebrate our catholic Faith together.

St Nicholas 175 Year Mass:

This year our Parish, St Nicholas of Myra, is celebrating 175 years of ministry to the Penrith District. As part of the Parish celebrations there will be a special Mass this Sunday, 23 February at 10:00am. The student choirs from St Mary MacKillop and St Nicholas will be leading the thanksgiving song after communion. There will be refreshments served after mass and everyone is warmly invited to attend this parish celebration.

Ash Wednesday:

Wednesday 5 March is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The Season of Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter (Sundays are not included in the count) and is a time of preparation for the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. Ash Wednesday is the day for us to take stock of our spiritual lives and we are encouraged to attend Mass on this day in order to mark the beginning of the Lenten season. As Lent begins, we should set out specific spiritual goals we would like to reach before Easter and decide how we will pursue them - for instance receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

To celebrate the beginning of Lent all students will attend an Ash Wednesday Liturgy at 10:00am. All parents and family members are warmly invited to attend this special prayer time. During the liturgy, the ashes which give Ash Wednesday its name will be distributed. The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year. While the ashes symbolise penance and contrition, they are also a reminder that God is gracious and merciful to those who call on Him with repentant hearts. The distribution of ashes, is a tangible reminder of our own need to focus on being better people. Through acts of penance comes a change of heart – a coming back to God. Our personal Lenten journey should be marked with reflection, prayer and penance. Throughout Lent we should strive to model the actions of Christ. As the prophet Joel wrote:

‘Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks – come back to me with all your heart.’



Catholic Schools Week:

As part of our celebration for Catholic Schools Week (10-14 March) we will have a whole school liturgy at 2:00pm followed by open classrooms on Tuesday 11 March. All parents are warmly invited to attend this celebration of faith and learning.

Mrs Leesa Gillard
Religious Education Coordinator

Primary Swimming Carnival

SWIMMING AGE CHAMPIONS:

Congratulations to our swimming carnival champions and runner ups. Junior Female Champion-Ella Grennell, Junior Female Runner Up-Jessica Gallen, Junior Female Runner Up-Samantha Gallen, 11 Years Female Champion-Arianne Thomas, 11 Years Female Runner Up-Laura Carpenter, Senior Female Champion-Alison Gallen, Senior Female Runner Up-Rebecca Dunn, Junior Boy Champion-Malachi Lufe, Junior Boy Runner Up-Brock Stapleton, 11 Years Boy Champion-Joel Corcoran, 11 Years Boy Runner Up-Benjamin Baker, Senior Boy Champion-Caleb Ellston and Senior Boy Champion-Samuel Dardaneliotis

NEPEAN ZONE TEAM:

Congratulations to our Zone team who will be representing St Mary MacKillop at the Nepean Zone Carnival on Tuesday 25 February. Good luck to Jack Anderton, Xavier Xerri, Alex Carpenter, Gabriel Dardaneliotis, Olivia Eilersen, Ella Grennell, Jessica Gallen, Talei Simmons, Brock Stapleton, Samantha Gallen, Oliver Zakostelsky, Keely Marsh, Harry Hicks, Xavier Plowman, Ben Dardaneliotis, Joel Corcoran, Elise Flynn Marco Perri, Kaliah Stapleton, Benjamin Baker, Tyson Goodwin Malachi Lufe, Georgia Youssef, Laura Carpenter, Angelique Cortese, Rebecca Dunn, Caleb Ellston, Alison Gallen, Liam Kroon, Samuel Dardaneliotis, Anthony Farrell, Matthew Farrell, Claudia Stewart and Arianne Thomas. Thank you to Mrs Thomas for offering to be our parent helper on the day. We still need another parent helper to assist at the carnival. If you are able to offer some time please contact Mrs Rowan or the office.

P & F News

P & F Welcome BBQ - Thank You:

Thank you to all the student decorators and parent volunteers, Mr Siciliano and Mr Cauchi who helped out at the P & F Welcome BBQ. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with sunshine, delicious food supplied by the Outback Steakhouse (Hicks family), cakes supplied by Mrs Billington, wonderful families and friends and a couple of lucky raffle prize winners. What a delightful way to make new friends and reconnect with the current families. WELCOME. Congratulations to the four lucky raffle winners from the P & F Welcome BBQ they were Kristi, Jerred.L, Fiona.R and Rachael.

P & F Annual General Meeting (AGM) - Tuesday, 4 March 2014 @ 7:30pm:

The AGM will be taking place in Week 6. This is a great opportunity for all parents and friends to hear reports from the School Principal, the President of the P & F, the Treasurer, Fundraising committee and Parent Representative Council. It is also when we vote in new members to take up the P & F positions for 2014. ALL ARE WELCOME.

Class Parent Representatives 2014 - Call Out

SMMPS Parent and Friends are now calling for nominations from parents interested in becoming a Class Parent Representative from classes Kindy - Year 6 for 2014. The role is to be a point of contact for new and existing parents at the school and act as the communicator at the Class Parent Rep meetings that take place once a term. A Note will be going out this week with more information. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Parent Representative Council (PRC) AGM - Monday, 3 March 2014.

This meeting will be taking place at the Diocesan Assembly Centre (DAC) Cnr Flushcombe Road and Marion Street Blacktown. At this meeting Ms Monique Dalli, Leader of e-learning at Gilroy Catholic College Castle Hill will also share some insights and knowledge about iPads. All are welcome. For more information go to: <http://www.prc.catholic.edu.au/news-events>

Parent Representative Council (PRC) Meeting - Wednesday, 26 March 2014:

This is a meeting for parents and carers with children in Year 6, 7 and 8 who are looking to enhance their child's early high school experience. "The Transition to High School: Helping your child to build resilience & navigate change" meeting is taking place at **St Paul's Catholic College, 198 Old Prospect Rd, Greystanes**. For more information or to confirm your seat please email Selina on: prcparrapresident@gmail.com.

SKOOLBAG Application - For all parents and family that don't already have the SKOOLBAG application on their phone, you may be missing out on instant updates on school events, news, assemblies etc. Via your mobile phone go to <http://www.skoolbag.com.au/forparents.php> and download the app for your iPhone or Android. Keep yourself in the loop.

Zooper Dooper Days:

The following days Zooper Doopers will be sold to the students during the 1:30pm recess. Prices are 60c for a whole and 30c for half. **February:** Monday 24, Wednesday 26 and Friday 28. **March:** Tuesday 4, Thursday 6, Monday 10, Wednesday 12, Friday 14, Tuesday 18, Thursday 20, Monday 24, Wednesday 26 and Friday 28.

SMMPS Autumn School Fete 2014 WRISTBAND orders DUE 28 March 2014:

The Autumn Fete 'Amusement rides wristbands' notes were sent out last week. Pre-ordered wristbands are \$20 each for unlimited rides. However on the day of the fete they will be sold at \$25 each. Pre-Order and pay early to avoid the extra cost.

SMMPS Autumn School Fete 2014 student POSTER DESIGN competition:

Final entries will be accepted Friday 7 March 2014 at 9:00am. Information about the Autumn fete poster competition has been displayed in the Library, the school hall and the school noticeboard. There will be a winner nominated from each grade by Mr Siciliano for best design. Have fun, be creative and try your best.

Thank you and God Bless

Liz Whalen

President-On behalf of the P&F Executive Team

Dates for Your Diary Term 1 - 2014

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Friday	21 February	9:15am	Opening School Mass
Tuesday	25 February		Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival @ Glenbrook Pool
Wednesday	26 February	2:00pm	Literacy Parent Workshop
Friday	28 February	9:15am 2:30pm	Diocesan Swimming Carnival @ Blacktown Year 1 Liturgy Whole School Assembly-Multi-Purpose Centre
Monday	3 March		2015 Kindergarten Enrolments Open
Tuesday	4 March	7:00pm 7:30pm 7:00pm	Parent Rep. Meeting P & F AGM Meeting Parent Meeting for Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Wednesday	5 March	10:00am	Ash Wednesday Liturgy-Lead by Year 2
Friday	7 March	2:30pm	Whole School Assembly-Multi Purpose Centre
Tuesday	11 March	2:00pm	Catholic Schools Week-Liturgy and Open Classrooms
Thursday	13 March	2:00pm	Catholic Schools Week-Captivate Orchestra Performance
Wednesday	12 March	1:30pm-3:00pm	Restorative Practice Parent Workshop
Friday	14 March		School Cross Country
Friday	21 March	9:15am	Year 3 Liturgy
Monday	24 March	2:15pm 7:00pm	5M Assembly 2015 Kindergarten Parent Information Evening
Friday	28 March	2:30pm	NSWCPS Swimming trials @ Homebush Whole School Assembly-Multi Purpose Centre
Monday	31 March	2:15pm	3W Assembly
Tuesday	1 April	7:00pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Tuesday	8 April	10:45am	Year 6 ANZAC Day Service @ Penrith Paceway
Wednesday	9 April	TBA	Easter Celebration/Pageant
Friday	11 April		Staff Development Day-Pupil Free Day Last Day of Term 1

Community News

- The Health Department wishes to inform parents that the problem of headlice has never been worse in NSW. Please check your children's heads regularly and report any sightings of headlice to the school office. Headlice are always about. It is not a problem of **ONE** class. It is, from time to time, a problem for **ALL** classes and **ALL** schools.
- Caroline Chisholm College Glenmore Park is now enrolling for 2015. An Open Night will take place on Monday 3 March from 6:00pm to 8:30pm this includes information sessions, displays, performances and tours. All considering enrolment for Year 7 in 2015 are invited to attend. Students from St Mary MacKillop Primary are guaranteed a place at Caroline Chisholm College. For further information contact the College on 4737 5506.
- On Sunday 23 March Sacred Heart Parish at Luddenham will be hold a Smart Loving workshop from 2:00pm-5:00pm at Holy Family School Hall located at 32 Willowdene Avenue Luddenham. All couples as well as engaged couples are invited to attend Bookings are essential, please contact Jess on 9319 6280 or email infor@smartloving.org