Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School,

St Mary MacKillop Feast Day:
Mary Helen MacKillop RSJ, also known as St Mary of the Cross, was an Australian of Scottish descent who, on the 17 October 2010 was declared a saint by the Catholic Church. Together with Reverend Julian Tenison Woods, she founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, a congregation of religious sisters which established a number of schools and welfare institutions throughout Australasia, with an emphasis on education for the rural poor. She is the only Australian thus far to be recognised by the Catholic Church as a saint. Today on our feast day we remember the many things that Mary MacKillop did for others and reflect on how we can continue her legacy, and the mission of the Sisters of St Joseph, in our own lives.

Mary MacKillop Prayer
Loving and eternal Father, You are glorified in your saints.
To you all praise, glory and honour!
You inspired Mary of the Cross to live by Faith in your Son, Jesus Christ, and to
Share in the saving power of his Cross.

As we travel on our way to join Mary MacKillop in our True home with you, we are asking her to pray with us
For this special favour……..

Lord hear our Prayer.
Amen

Quality Catholic Schools Survey (QCSS):
Last term all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta participated in the Quality Catholic School Survey. This was the second year that the Diocese of Parramatta partook in this project. The QCS provides data from students, staff and parents about our school’s cultural, behaviour, relationships and learning community which will assist us to focus our efforts for improvement by building on our successes. The QCSS survey helped us identify some of our strengths:

• Parents at SMMK feel that the school is focused on improvement and is receptive of, and understands, the communities’ views and concerns.
• Parents feel the educational programs and standards of the school address the needs of their children.
• Parents believe that their children are well prepared and supported during their transition to the next stage of their schooling.
• Parents feel that teachers deliver classes, which are interesting, and enjoyable for their child and that children are passionate about what they do.
• Parents see their children enjoying the learning they do at school but not always wanting to go to school.
• Parents feel that their child is not being subjected to harassment or bullying at school.

From the QCS survey we received feedback from parents in areas which we can focus our improvement. They include:

• Some parents believe that they should be given more of an opportunity and be more encouraged to make a contribution to school planning.
• Some parents’ perception of the range and quality of the extra-curricular activities provided by the school is an area for improvement in comparison to other learning opportunity indicators.
• Some parents believe that the extent to which their children’s homework aids their learning and teaches organisational skills is an area for review.
• Some parents feel that behaviour could be managed more effectively at their child’s school.

As part of our ongoing planning and development we will continue building on our strengths and reviewing those areas which require attention.

National Curriculum Three Year Plan:
The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in collaboration with states and territories have developed the new Australian curriculum for all Australian Students in English, Mathematics, Science and History. These documents will be trialled and implemented over the next three years. As per ACARA guidelines, at St Mary MacKillop, we will implement the English Australian Syllabus in 2014, followed by Mathematics and Science in 2015 and History in 2016. Important contemporary themes and general capabilities addressed in the National Curriculum include: critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, information and communication and intercultural understanding. The teachers at St Mary MacKillop have commenced and will continue professional learning in developing a greater understanding of the English National Curriculum in preparation for its implementation next year.

Thought for the Week
"Do not let your troubles disturb your trust in God”
Mary MacKillop 19.2.1885

Have a Blessed Week

Michael Siciliano
PRINCIPAL
God Is With Us Prayer Book:
With this newsletter all families will receive a God Is With Us Prayer Book and a letter from our Executive Director, Mr Greg Whitby. This Prayer Book is a way of celebrating the Year of Faith, which the Church is currently celebrating. God Is With Us contains a variety of prayers that can be used in the family home for many special occasions. This wonderful resource compliments our St Mary MacKillop Prayer Bag and I hope you will find it valuable in putting God at the heart of your home.

Restorative Practice Parent Survey:
As a school community we are currently reviewing our understanding and usage of Restorative Practices. To gather relevant data from all stakeholders we are surveying our staff, students and parents. The information gathered from these surveys will guide our future planning and development. Very shortly, parents will be randomly selected to complete a short survey and your input is very much appreciated. If you are not randomly selected and would like to complete a survey they will be readily available from the school office. I thank you in advance for your participation.

Feast of the Assumption:
Thursday 15 August is the Feast of the Assumption. The Feast of the Assumption celebrates the belief that the body and soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary was taken into heaven after the end of her earthly life. Mary’s assumption into heaven is seen by many as a fulfillment of Jesus’ promise to all faithful servants; that they too will be received into the kingdom of God. On the Feast of the Assumption all of the St Mary MacKillop students will participate in a grade prayer service in the library.

Grandparents Liturgy and Book Fair:
Grandparents Day will be held on Friday 16 August. On this day we will celebrate the wonderful gift that grandparents are to our lives. The festivities for celebrating our grandparents will be:

- 9:30am Grandparents Liturgy in the Multi Purpose Hall
- 10:15am Grandparents Morning Tea (Multi Purpose Hall verandah)
- 10:45am Grandparents and grandchildren picnic on the grass (please pack yourself a lovely picnic, chairs and a picnic rug.) During the picnic time grades (grandparents included) will be called to the Book Fair.

Mrs Leesa Gillard
Acting REC Co-ordinator

Voice Of Youth:
Congratulations to all the Year 6 students who participated in the recent school final of the Voice of Youth public speaking competition. Over 20 Year 6 students were selected from the grade to compete for only 3 spots in the cluster final to be held next week at Luddenham. There were a wide variety of topics selected with lots evidence of research. Congratulations to Jessica, Ethan, Lilly-Rose and Jaz (reserve) who will now compete against neighbouring Catholic schools next Tuesday. Best of luck!!

Nepean Zone Athletics:
Tomorrow 40 students will compete in track and field events in the Nepean Zone Athletics Carnival. We look forward to hearing about some great results. Students who progress further will then compete in the Parramatta Diocesan Carnival on Friday 23 August. We wish all our competitors good luck tomorrow.

ICAS Mathematics Competition:
Students who have registered for the ICAS Mathematics competition will sit this test next Tuesday 13 August. This is the last of the four ICAS competitions that will be completed this year. Certificates for Writing and English will arrive in the coming weeks.

Peer Support:
Congratulations and thank you to all the Year 6 leaders for your organisation and facilitation of the Peer Support program which concluded this week. It was a pleasure seeing our Year 6 students leading their groups through activities which focused on the concept of ‘Optimism’. A Thank You BBQ is being organised in appreciation for the hard work that these Year 6 students have put in. This will take place on Monday.

Year 5 Leadership Program:
Continuing the strong theme of leadership, Year 5 will this week begin a 5 week Leadership program in preparation for their leadership roles that they will undertake next year. Our Year 5 students will work in small groups, participating in activities and discussions. Thanks to Mrs Meehan, Mrs Rowan, Mrs Gray and Mr Cauchi for facilitating this program.

Mr Steve Cauchi
Assistant Principal

Congratulations to the following boys who represented our school at the Stage 2 Soccer gala day last Tuesday, 30 July 2013. Xavier, Marco, Hayden, Tyson, Harry, Isaac, Francesco, Jess, Harrison, Baxter, Patrick and Cole. The boys had a very successful day and played extremely well as a team. They showed good sportsmanship throughout the day and made St. Mary MacKillop very proud. The boys played tirelessly to come away with 2 wins, 2 draws and 2 close loses which resulted in third overall in their pool. A huge thank you goes out to Mr Perri who gave up his time to coach the boys.

Mrs Rachel Paine
Book Fair

St. Mary Mackillop is hosting a Scholastic Book Fair in the school library on Friday 16 August as part of our Grandparent’s Day celebrations and we would love to see you there. Scholastic delivers hundreds of quality books, suitable for every interest and reading level, starting from $5.00. Every book sold benefits our school, adding resources to our library and classrooms. You may also wish to personally donate a book to the school library. The fair will also be open on Monday, 19 August for students to purchase books before and after school and at lunch time. We look forward to seeing many parents and grandparents on Friday in the library after the Grandparents Day Liturgy.

MRS MAREE EISENHUTH
Teacher Librarian

P & F News

Southlands "Your Rewards Program" 2nd August - 17 September 2013:

Liz Whalen, President, thanks the school community for their support of Southlands "Your Rewards Program" and the P & F will do the rest. Thanks for all your support and keep your eyes on the screen every time you visit Southlands shopping centre to see where we rank.

Woolworths Earn and Learn - THANK YOU:

We would like to thank you all for your fabulous support with the Woolworth 'Earn and Learn' program this year. We have sent off over 30,000 Woolworth stickers, and once verified, Woolworth will enable the school to redeem an array of valuable educational resources for our children to use. So thank you once again for all your support, as this would not have been accomplished without your dedication and weekly grocery spending. A big Thank You to Mrs Neal and Mrs Warby for your dedication in organising, chasing, counting and the delivering the sticker sheets for our school. You both deserve a medal.

St Mary of the Cross Feast Day Celebration:

Thursday, 8 August 2013 is a day of celebration and recognition of our beautiful St Mary MacKillop for everything that she represents relating to love, kindness, respect, voluntary work, honesty, humility and perseverance. All these qualities are what made St Mary MacKillop - our first Saint of Australia - such a loved woman and mother figure to many disadvantaged children and families in the past. We pray that our children will remember her with love and appreciation as they enjoy the treats provided to them during their lunch break. Thank you to Mrs Gillard and Mr Siciliano for suggesting the treats to the children and we extend a warm thank you to all the wonderful parents who assisted the P & F with the distribution of the doughnuts and lollies for our children. Once again this event could not be accomplished without your kind assistance. Thank you.

Grandparent's Day - Friday 16 August 2013 at 10:00am:

At our school we will be having a lovely liturgy for our Grandparents in appreciation of their precious presence in our lives, this will be on Friday, 16 August at 10:00am. Now as we know this is a double event with the fabulous Book Fair and I wish to extend a humble request to parents that would be able to provide an hour of their time on this day to help out with serving tea, coffee and cakes to our beautiful grandparents and guests on the day. We would also need a few baked goodies. A note will be sent out by the end of this week providing more information.

P & F Dance-a-Thon - Wednesday 21 August 2013 - This is a MUFTI-DAY:

Dance-a-Thon forms have been distributed to all students, so they may begin to gather sponsorship for dancing at the Dance-a-Thon. We are blessed to have the wonderful Caroline Chisholm students volunteering their priceless time and phenomenal dance skills for this event and if you are a huge fan of 'So You Think You Can Dance - Australia', then you would be familiar with our special guest BJ Rorke from ALive Performing Arts Centre, who was a contestant in Season 2 of SYTYCD. Both the girls from Caroline Chisholm and BJ Rorke will be leading our kids with dance moves and grooves whilst raising money for our school. So dust off your dance shoes and have as many people as you can sponsor you by supporting our Dance-a-Thon. We wish to thank Mrs Keane for her dedication in organising this event, we truly appreciate your time in chasing up the finer details. This will be a fun multi-day for all children. As always, we would appreciate the assistance of parents and friends on the day to distribute the drinks for our kids once they complete the Dance-a-thon. Hope to see you there.

Class Parent Representative and General P & F Meeting - Week 6:

Just a reminder our next Class Parent Representative meeting is taking place on Tuesday 20 August 2013 at 7:00pm followed by the General P & F meeting at 7:30pm in the Multi-Purpose Centre. We warmly invite all parents and friends to the General P & F meeting, as it is a great way to find out information relating to the school, keeping connected and assisting with events that take place. Please send forward to Liz Whalen on 0416 102 233 any items you wish to bring up at the meeting so we may include it on the agenda. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Next Autumn Fete 2014 Meeting:

For your diary, our next Autumn Fete 2014 meeting is booked for Monday 26 August 2013 @ 6:30pm in the Multi-Purpose Centre. All are welcome. Thank you kindly for all parents, family and friends that support and volunteer selflessly for our school and our children. You are truly great examples of St Mary MacKillop's quote "We must teach more by example, than by word" (1867), you are a true blessing to all that cross your path. God Bless.

Liz Whalen
President on behalf of P & F Executive Team
### Proposed Uniform Change:

Over the past few years, the colour of the girls’ school shoes has always been a hot topic brought up for discussion at the Parents and Friends meetings. This year, the issue has once again been raised due to insufficient stock of brown shoes during the year in local shoe retail stores. After deliberating and discussing the possibility of changing the girl shoes to black, we have also discussed about changing the colour of the girls stockings for the Winter uniform and the socks for the Summer uniform.

The options that were suggested were:

- **Summer** White socks with black shoes or Brown socks with black shoes and **Winter** Black stockings with black shoes or, green stockings with black shoes or brown stockings with black shoes.

Holistically, this type of decision requires the input and thoughts from all parents and teachers within the school. We warmly invite you to share your thoughts on the proposed changes, which will be an agenda item at the next General P&F meeting, taking place on Tuesday 20 August at 7:30pm in the Multi Purpose Centre. All are welcome to attend.

However, if you are unable to attend the P&F meeting, please complete the slip below and return it to the office by Friday 16 August 2013.

Kind regards,

Tracey Marsh

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### Girls School Uniform - Preferences

- □ White Socks with Black Shoes or □ Brown Socks with Black Shoes

**Winter Uniform:**

- □ Black Stockings with Black Shoes or □ Green Stockings with Black Shoes or
- □ Brown Stockings with Black Shoes