Dear Parents and Caregivers,

First Holy Communion

During the next two weekends over fifty children from Mary MacKillop will receive their first Holy Communion. Please join with us in praying for all the children of the St Nicholas of Myra Parish who will be receiving the Sacrament of Eucharist for the very first time.

O Jesus, who has loved us with such exceeding great love as to give us the ineffable gift of the Holy Eucharist, inflame us with a burning zeal to promote Thy glory by preparing worthily the little children who are to approach Thy holy table for the first time. Protect, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, these young souls from harm, strengthen their faith, increase their love and endow them with all the virtues that will make them worthy to receive Thee. Saint Mary MacKillop, keep safe the children who are making their first Communion. Amen.

Restorative Justice at MMP

At Mary MacKillop we work on the basis that individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate with others, whether they themselves win or lose, when the process is fair. The classroom is a community of learners where those who fail to follow agreements know they will be helped to find the right way; through think time, circle time, and challenging questions. Following these strategies, they will be reintegrated into the community of learners. At this point, we are able to move forward student learning and student outcomes, as well as personally and emotionally, richer individuals. The playground provides an opportunity for the implementation of social, team and interactive skills. The children at school are learners. Mistakes are often made. However, Restorative Practices provides a process where these occasions are seen as opportunities for learning. For more information regarding Restorative practice please speak to your child's teacher.

Empowering Local Schools Initiative

Mary MacKillop Primary School has been selected to join a network of nine Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta as part of the Australian Government’s Empowering Local Schools (ELS) initiative. The Australian Government has committed $475.5 million over seven years to rollout the Empowering Local Schools initiative in two phases with the aim of empowering participating schools to make decisions at a local level; supporting them to better respond to the needs of students and the school community; and to provide services designed to assist their students to achieve their best educational outcomes. Up to 1000 government, Catholic and independent schools across the country will benefit from participating in phase one of the Empowering Local Schools initiative over 2012 and 2013. As Catholic schools already have high levels of autonomy in local decision making the nine schools will work together as a professional learning community (PLC). While in it's beginning stages, the Empowering Local Schools is a welcome initiative for schools in the Diocese of Parramatta as it provides additional resources and structures to build on the existing work in the Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) Program.

Each school will receive $46,500 as part of the initiative and will determine as a professional learning community the most effective ways to resource and realise the aims of the initiative.

Thankyou

Sincere thanks to Mr Michael Stratton our maintenance man, for over eight years, who will be concluding his service at Mary MacKillop this week. Michael will be moving to Queensland to pursue further career opportunities. We wish Michael and his family all the very best for the future.

Reminder

I would like to draw your attention to a couple of upcoming events: Primary Athletics Carnival on the 7 June and the Staff Development Day (Pupil Free Day) on the 8 June.

Thought for the Week

“Let us look for strength from God who alone can give it.”
St Mary MacKillop 2.6.1867

Have a Blessed Week

Mr Michael Siciliano
Principal
Religious Education News

Mother’s Day:
It was wonderful to celebrate Mother’s Day with so many people from our community. Thank you to the Year One teachers and students for preparing the beautiful liturgy.

First Communion:
Over the next two weekends we have 50 students receiving the sacrament of communion for the first time. We wish these students all the best as they make the next step towards being a fully initiated member of our Catholic faith.

Looking Ahead
Kindergarten will celebrate their first Liturgy of the Word in the library tomorrow Friday 1 June at 9:15am. I thank the teachers for their preparation of the students and look forward to seeing parents and friends from our wider community present at this special time of prayer.

Mr Scott Carroll
Religious Education Co-ordinator

Year 6 Canberra Excursion
Early this morning our Year 6 leaders left for their two-day excursion to Canberra. Over the two days the children will visit Parliament House, Australian War Memorial, Australian Institute of Sport, Electoral Education Centre, National Art Gallery and Questacon! We look forward to them sharing their many stories and photos next week.

UCANN Parent Forum
Last week Mary Mackillop hosted the UCANN (Understanding children with additional needs network) forum. The theme for the night was ‘Catering for Diversity’. The evening was well attended by not only Mary Mackillop parents but many other parents from the Parramatta Diocese. Key speakers on the night were David Hawkins, (Clinical Psychologist) and Liz Rowe (CEO – Team Leader Learning Support). If you have any concerns or questions regarding the support your child is receiving in class or about the process of referrals please see your child’s teacher. Further concerns or issues will then be raised and discussed with the Stage Co-ordinator, learning support staff and Principal.

Primary Athletics Carnival
The Primary Athletics Carnival will be held at Blair Oval St Mary’s next Thursday 7 June. Thanks to the parent helpers who have offered to assist on the day. If you can help with timekeeping and place judging, please meet Mr Cauchi at Blair Oval at 9:00am. Please ensure that all permission notes are returned to the class teacher.

Peer Support Program
On Monday our school commenced the Peer Support Program. This program, facilitated by our Year 6 leaders focuses this year on ‘Relationship Building’.

Each child has been placed in a small group with a Year 6 leader and this program will continue until the middle of Term Three. I encourage you to speak to your child about the Peer Support program and I thank our Year 6 students for their input and enthusiasm for the program.

Staff Development Day
A reminder that next Friday 8 June will be a Staff Development Day. The staff will be working closely with our CEO colleagues Tammy Roosen and Paul Stenning. The focus of the day is around our school goal of mathematics and more specifically, teachers will be working around designing open-ended tasks and asking challenging questions to enable the children to reflect on their mathematical thinking.
Wilcannia Visit

Last week we had the pleasure of having a visit from our friends from St Theresa’s Catholic Primary School, Wilcannia. Accompanied by Mr Patrick Ellis, (former Mary MacKillop staff member) and several teachers, the 15 Year 1 and 2 students from Wilcannia participated in an art/craft lesson with our Year 2 students and a friendly game of T Ball with representatives from each class. The children and Mary MacKillop staff then had a BBQ lunch before joining us for our whole school assembly. This week, Mrs Mitchell (Year 1 teacher), is in Wilcannia working along side the teachers at St Theresa’s. Over the years, we have contributed school stationery as a social justice initiative to raise awareness for our children on what schooling is like in Wilcannia. At our assembly, again we presented them with some stationery material which we know will be put to good use! Thanks again to our dedicated P&F committee who organised the BBQ and drinks for our guests.

Sydney Writers Festival

On Friday, 25 May Mrs Eisenhuth and six of our students attended the annual Sydney Writer’s Festival programme for schools at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, Penrith. The day involved four children’s authors who spoke about their writing backgrounds, their books and how they became successful authors. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the authors and their stories. We were able to purchase signed books for our school library, while some students bought books to take home with them. Authors presenting were: Emily Rodda, Tristan Bancks, Oliver Jeffers, & Oliver Phommavanh, each of these talented writers had their audience enthralled, laughing and participating in what they had to share. Words like ‘awesome’, ‘fantastic’, ‘cool’ were heard throughout the day describing this wonderful experience. The students took away with them some inspirational ideas and were motivated to continue to work on their creative writing skills. Keep a look out for the new books in our library!

Maree Eisenhuth
Teacher Librarian

P & F News

A huge thank you to everyone for continuing to support the Woolworths Earn and Learn program. There are extra sticker sheets available at the office for anyone who needs more. Once you have filled a sticker sheet you can either send it to school or place it in the Mary MacKillop box at Woolworths Southlands or Woolworths Westfield.

It has also been great to see our school rising on the Southlands Leader Board, it appears that we have jumped from around 8th place to 5th place this week. The top 5 schools at the end of the program share in $15,000 cash so let’s work together to keep our chart rising. All retailers in Southlands are happy to issue receipts, even for small purchases, as every ‘school dollar’ counts so don’t forget to ask for a receipt when you grab a coffee, rent a dvd, or even buy a loaf of bread and after you have collected your Woolworths Earn and Learn stickers pop your Woolworths receipt into the Southlands envelope and into the barrel. If you have Southlands receipts at home and haven’t had a chance to take them into the shopping centre feel free to send them in to the office and we will place them in the barrel for you. The next bonus double up day is Saturday 9 June and the program ends on Sunday 24 June so let’s keep our tally rising.

Second hand uniform shop will open on Friday 15 June after morning assembly 9:15–9:45am
### Dates for Your Diary Term 2 - 2012

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| Friday  | 1 June | 9:15am     | Year 6 Canberra Excursion  
Kindergarten Liturgy                                                      |
| Tuesday | 5 June | 8:45am     | Year 3 Glenbrook National Park Excursion                              |
| Wednesday| 6 June | 9:00am     | Year 2 Penrith Lakes Excursion  
ICAS Science Competition                                                   |
| Thursday| 7 June | 8:40am     | Primary Athletics Carnival - Blair Oval St Marys                     |
| Friday  | 8 June |            | Staff Development Day - Pupil Free Day                               |
| Monday  | 11 June|            | Queen’s Birthday Long Weekend                                         |
| Thursday| 14 June| 8:40am     | Year 4 Old Government House & Experiment Farm Excursion               |
| Friday  | 15 June| 11:30am    | 6C Assembly  
Reports Sent Home  
NSWCPS Cross Country                                                       |
| Monday  | 18 June| 3:15pm-8:15pm| ICAS Writing Competition  
Parent Teacher Interviews                                                   |
| Tuesday | 19 June| 3:15pm-6:15pm| Parent Teacher Interviews                                             |
| Friday  | 22 June| 10:00am    | KD Assembly                                                            |
| Tuesday | 26 June|            | Stage 2 Boys Soccer                                                   |
| Friday  | 29 June| 11:30am    | 3M Assembly Term 2 Concludes                                          |

### Maths Olympiad

Last week, 30 students from Years 4, 5 and 6 completed the first of five Maths Olympiad challenges for 2012. The Maths Olympiad focuses on open-ended problem solving tasks and encourages the children to think creatively and logically to solve complex questions. Each KIT we will publish a question from the Olympiad. Test your mathematical thinking!

**Time: 5 Minutes**

**In a group of dogs and their owners, there are exactly 20 heads and 64 legs. How many dogs are in the group?**

Answer next KIT!!

### Captivate Performances

A number of talented musicians and singers from our school will join with students from across the diocese in upcoming performances. You are all warmly invited to attend. Tickets are available online (links below). There are a number of performances on sale so please ensure you select the appropriate performance.

**Choir performing at “Music Showcase”** - 7.00pm, Thursday, 21 June, 2012


**String Ensembles performing at “Strings Showcase”** - 7.00pm, Tuesday 26 June, 2012

Tickets available at [http://www.trybooking.com/BIJF](http://www.trybooking.com/BIJF)

**Venue** – Both performances will be at Nagle College, 58a Orwell Street, Blacktown South.

### “Volunteers Required”

The school will be purchasing new class readers and we require volunteers to assist in the covering of these books. If any parents or grandparents are able to assist please contact the office or Mrs Napoli. Covering materials will be provided. Thank you.