Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

Father Peter’s tenure as Parish Priest at Toukley/Lake Munmorah finishes on Friday 10th April. We have been blessed by Father Peter’s spiritual and pastoral leadership over the past 9 years. His tendency to reach out to the poor and marginalised has characterised his leadership in our parish. Father Peter has also been instrumental in ensuring that our school has a Before and After School Care facility. Within our community, Father Peter will be deeply missed.

It is important to acknowledge Father Peter’s parish leadership, consequently we will farewell him as part of our Holy Week Liturgy on Tuesday 31st March. You are most welcome to join us for this special celebration. Our liturgy commences at 9.15am in the Church.

Bishop Peter has announced that Father Stephen Wayoyi will be the Administrator of Toukley/Lake Munmorah Parish, commencing 11 April. Father Stephen has previously ministered at Wyong and is presently an Assistant Priest at Woy Woy. Father Michael will remain in our parish and Father Philip will be moving to Woy Woy.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
We congratulate the children who this afternoon are celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. We trust that sharing your failings and humanity with Jesus will deepen your prayerful relationship with Our Lord.

Kinder 2016
Time flies. Our Kinder 2016 Information Evening is at 7.00pm on Monday 30th March. Enrolment packs will be distributed as part of the evening.

Congratulations Year 5
We congratulate our Year 5 students on their excellent behaviour and attitude during last week’s overnight excursion to Bathurst. Our children displayed lovely manners, were good listeners and participated enthusiastically in the range of activities offered. Many affirming comments were made by the accommodation management and staff. Well done, Year 5!

Maths Parent Education
Our Maths Parent Education session is on Tuesday 24th March. Practical ideas for how to help your child understand Maths is a focus. The repeated sessions are at 9.15am and 6.30pm. Free child-minding is available. Please join us as we help increase your confidence to be able to support your child’s Maths learning.

Holy Week and Farewell Liturgy for Father Peter
Please join us as we celebrate both Holy Week and farewell Father Peter with a special liturgy commencing at 9.15am on Tuesday 31st March.

Your Thoughts and Prayers
Please keep the Piltz family in your thoughts and prayers. Luka’s (6 Green) grandfather passed away very recently. May your treasured memories and Our Lord’s strength bring you considerable courage during this difficult time.

Kind Regards,

Kevin Williams
Principal

Upcoming Events
- Sacrament of Reconciliation
  Today
  4.00pm + 5.30pm

- Cancer Council Healthy Lunchbox Presentation
  9.15am—10.00am
  Friday 20 March

- Maths Parent Education
  9.15am + 6.30pm
  Tuesday 24 March

- Year 6 Cluster Mass
  Thursday 26 March

- Kinder 2016 Information Evening
  7.00pm
  Monday 30 March

- Holy Week and Farewell Liturgy for Father Peter
  9.15am
  Tuesday 31 March

- MacKillop College Transition Day 1
  Wednesday 1 April

Some of our Year 5 students at Bathurst
From Our REC

Reconciliation
This afternoon, at 4.00pm and 5.30pm, many children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will make the Sacrament of Reconciliation. These children, with the support of their families, have been preparing for this Sacrament over the last month. Please keep these children in your prayers today.

Holy Week
This year, our Holy Week Liturgy will be held at 9.15am on Tuesday 31st March (Week 10) in the church. We would love to see many parents attend during this most special week for the Catholic Church.

Stations of the Cross
Last week a note went home asking for the participation of students in the Good Friday ‘Stations of the Cross’, held Friday 3rd April at St Mary’s church. Please note, this is not a school day. I have been excited by the number of students and parents volunteering their time to participate or be a helper. There has been a tremendous amount of response especially from the younger grades - fantastic! I would still like to have some more students involved, particularly from our Year 5 and 6 students. Please return the note or contact the office if you are able to participate or help in any way. Thank you.

ANZAC Day
A date for the diary - our ANZAC Day liturgy will be held on Friday 24th April (Week 1, Term 2) at 10.00am. Members from our local RSL, Toukley, will be present for this special 100 year memorial. Please look out for a note that will be going home this week outlining the details of the ANZAC Day March. We always encourage children to come along and march under our school banner on Saturday 25th.

Project Compassion - Caritas Australia
There are Project Compassion donation boxes in every classroom. Mums and dads, please try to find the time to visit the website for Caritas Australia, http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion/, a website the children will be visiting during class time. It provides information, videos, pictures and stories about the work Caritas Australia do in communities around Australia and around the world. It’s a great starting point for discussion about how we can help others!

Emma Sellars
Religious Education Coordinator

From Our Family Liaison Officer

Parent Workshops/ Activities
Friday March 20th—Cancer Council Healthy Lunchbox presentation. RSVP is needed.

Tuesday March 24th—Parents Maths Workshop, morning and evening sessions. A great, informative session with lots of practical tips for parents as well as information about the recent Maths Assessment Interviews (MAI’s).

Tuesday morning cuppa and chat.
Every parent/carer is invited to come down to the undercroft area to look over the parent library, meet other parents and enjoy a quiet cuppa and chat.

NEW! Monday 9.15am Weeks 9 & 10. Start your Monday morning calm and relaxed with a beautiful meditation exercise. This 20-30 minute meditation/relaxation session is open to all parents/carers and takes you through the basics of meditation including breathing techniques, simple relaxation steps and ways to generally integrate a calming and relaxed sense into our everyday lives.

Donna Falzon
Family Liaison Officer
**KidsMatter**

Further to last week’s topic on children’s social development, this week’s article has Suggestions for Families about actively boosting children’s social development by practicing everyday social skills, demonstrating respectful family relationships and building confidence in children’s own strengths and values.

Children first learn about relationships from their own families. Families come in many different forms but for all, positive Family Relationships are important to children’s social and emotional development. The quality of family relationships is more important for children’s wellbeing than the size or composition of the family. With positive family relationships children learn how to connect to other people and build healthy relationships.

Building positive family relationships is also about dealing with conflict as well as making time to do fun things together. Conflict is a normal part of family life and in itself isn’t a problem—how it is managed may be though. Learning how to deal with conflict in a respectful, positive way at home sets children up to be able to better manage their emotions and their response when conflict arises at other times, such as at school or sporting activities.

**From Our Librarian**

**Last week for borrowing**

As we wind down towards the end of term this will be the last week children will borrow. All library books must be returned next week. It is disturbing when children, whose books are overdue, are not sure where these are. Do you have a special place for them? Perhaps library books and readers can be put straight back into school bags once they are read. It is amazing to hear where some library books have turned up after a long hard search!!!

**Lest We Forget - Gallipoli 1915-2015**

As we approach the end of term all classes are listening and responding to literature written for ANZAC DAY. There is a rich selection of picture books being published at the moment, in honour of our 100th Anniversary. Children will also be making poppies during their library lesson in preparation for our school celebration in Term 2. An event that happened so long ago is a hard concept for little children to understand. Why not have a family discussion about the significance of ANZAC Day and why it is a special Australian celebration.

Happy Reading Everyone.

**From Our Office**

**Leave Requests**

For leave requests of 10 or more school days you must complete an “Application for Exemption from Attendance at School” form. This request must be approved by Mr Williams. For Leave requests for less than 10 days, a request in writing to your child’s class teacher is still required.

Thank you to the parents who are phoning the school of a morning to notify us that their child won’t be attending school.

Thank you
Lyn and Jacqui

**Sacraments**

For children intending to celebrate their First Eucharist, the initial Parent Meeting is at 4.00pm on Thursday 30th April in our Church. Children in Year 4 (and any older students) are welcome to be involved.

**Easter Raffle**

Tickets will be on sale at the top playground before school from 8.30am and at recess each day. 50c each or 3 for $1

Donations of Easter eggs and baskets can be made at the raffle ticket table each morning.

**Star Awards**

Tayla B  
Harry B  
Lacee B  
Jaxon C  
Ramone E  
Jasmine G  
Bella E  
Beckett B  
Caleb F  
Keira-Lee D  
Stefanie S  
Tom H  
Rhys D  
Krystal S  
Taahirah G  
Ben W  
Erin I  
Mia M  
Theresa D  

**Something We’ve Noticed**

Approximately 2 weeks ago a huge hole, around 70cms deep, was discovered in the oval. A great deal of speculation occurred about what animal created the hole. Our Groundsman, Bernie and his son, Peter solved the mystery. It was an echidna.

Congratulations to 6 Blue and 1 Gold who both guessed the correct animal. And, sorry K Blue, no it was not a dinosaur, a bear, a whale, a meercat or a flying fox.

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Diocesan Swimming
On Tuesday 10th March at Mingara Pool we had the Diocesan Swimming Carnival.
St Mary’s had some great young talent representing the Central Coast Cluster.
Alexis C swam 50m Freestyle, came 3rd and qualifies for the Polding Carnival, Josh H came 1st in his 50m Freestyle, he also qualifies as does our Junior relay team of Laura N, Laura E, Libby T and Alexis C which came 2nd.
Laura N, Maddison D and Natasha H also swam beautifully in their individual events narrowly missing out on places.

Diocesan Winter Trials
Best wishes to all our winter sport competitors.
Congratulations Liam S and Steven K who made the Soccer Team and Daniel D and Jye B who made the Open Rugby League team last week. They will be going to Tamworth later this year.
Good Luck for those trialling for Netball and Touch over the next 2 weeks

Liz Bain
Sports Coordinator