Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

I ask you to kindly keep Father Fitzgerald in your thoughts and prayers. Father Fitzgerald, affectionately known as ‘Father Fitz’ passed away late last week aged 88. Father Fitzgerald served in our parish and school for over 20 years. He was a real man of the people who connected deeply with many parishioners. Father Fitzgerald was instrumental in starting our school. He saw a growing need for a Catholic school in our area and in 1973 accepted the first students into St Mary’s.

Father Fitz’s pastoral sense and great love of Our Lord, coupled with his genuine interest in others and legendary sense of humour have endeared him to many in the wider local community. Often, during the Christmas holidays, Father Fitz would host visiting families from the country by inviting them to camp on our school’s oval area.

We pray that our Lord’s strength provides great comfort to the Fitzgerald family. Father Fitzgerald’s funeral will be held in our Church tomorrow at 11.30am.

The Learning Model

Responding to the needs of our students in Year 1, earlier this term we introduced The Learning Model. The Learning Model involves point of need instruction for all students during the English block. Critical to its success is collaborative planning time where the teachers involved meet to discuss the learning (and social and emotional) needs of every child. In a short period of time, we are already witnessing considerable student learning gains. When I visit classes it is obvious that the children are highly engaged. Some parents have already commented to teachers the difference that they are noticing in their child. If you have any feedback for us, please let myself or your child’s teacher know.

Congratulations

Through our Mini Vinnies Winter Appeal a huge amount of worthwhile goods (food, clothes, blankets) was collected to help those in need in our local community. We sincerely thank all families who helped contribute to the collection. Also, thanks to our Mini Vinnies students who relentlessly encouraged the children to think of others.

Soccer Gala Day

The postponed Soccer Gala Day involving older students in our school has been rescheduled for Thursday 10th September.

The Term's End

Again, we thank you for your support of our school during the term. Like the electronic sign says,

“Our school has respectful children.
Our school has funny children.
Our school has thoughtful children.
Our school has caring teachers.
Our school has wonderful parents.
We like our school.”

Say a prayer that the sun warms us all during the holidays.

Kind Regards,

Kevin Williams
Principal
From Our REC

Confirmation
Last week, enrolment forms went home to all children in Year 2 and those students in Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 who are Baptised but have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation is the first Sacrament that children complete during their school years and is a prerequisite for completing Reconciliation and First Eucharist. If you believe your child should have received an enrolment form, please contact the school office for a copy or download one from our school website.

Confirmation dates to add to your calendar:

- Compulsory Parent Information Afternoon - Thursday 16th July, 4.00pm (Week 1).
- Compulsory Parent and Children Classes - at St Mary’s 7-8pm on the 5th and 12th August or at St Brendan’s 4-5pm on the 6th and 13th August,
- Baptismal Promises - at St Brendan’s 5.00pm 8th August or at St Mary’s 9.00am 9th August,
- Commitment Family Mass - at St Brendan’s 5.00pm 15th August or at St Mary’s 9.00am 16th August,
- Practice - at St Brendan’s 4-5pm 27th August or at St Mary’s 4-5pm 26th August,
- Celebration of the Sacrament - at St Brendan’s 9am 29th August or at St Mary’s 12pm 29th August.

Grandparents’ Day Liturgy
During Week 3 (tentatively the date has been set for Thursday July 30th) we will be holding a Grandparent’s Liturgy. There will also be time scheduled for grandparents to visit their grandchild’s classroom. This is a great chance for children who have a grandparent nearby to show their Nan, Pop, Grandma or Grandpa their classroom and to celebrate them in a liturgy. More information will follow in our Week 1 newsletter, so please look out for details and spread the word.

Winter Appeal
Thank you St Mary’s! You’ve done an amazing job at bringing in winter items to be distributed to people in our local community by St Vincent DePaul. Well done to our Year 5 and 6 Mini Vinnies members for the many lunch times you have given up for this fundraising.

Have a happy and safe school holiday, I look forward to seeing you all next term.

Emma Sellars
Religious Education Coordinator

From Our Family Liaison Officer

School holidays means being able to break from routine and slow things down. This can be hard if parents have to work, but it’s still possible to have a change of pace.

Busy or overscheduled children sometimes lack the capacity to entertain themselves. All children need to be bored occasionally. Boredom stimulates their capacity to self occupy. As parents, it’s a good idea to resist the temptation to be their home entertainment machines when they get bored. Boredom won’t hurt them.

In fact most children prefer to come up with games and activities themselves than have parents organising everything for them, but it might take a while for children to start doing this if they’ve never had to before.

Rather than being organisers, parents can be supporters of their children’s holiday play time. Providing things such as dress ups, board games, craft, books and getting outside to play all stimulate children’s imagination and even boost their learning.

Donna Falzon
Family Liaison Officer
KidsMatter

In recent weeks the KidsMatter focus has been on relationships. Time together during the school holidays is an opportunity to use some of the ideas and suggestions in recent articles to build even better, positive family relationships.

It doesn’t take expensive holiday destinations or activities to get close to one another. Simply spending time with their parents and being the focus of their attention is what children crave. It’s often been said that too much screen time is not good for children and the same applies to parenting. Research shows that what children want is for mum and dad to be really listening to them, without a phone or tablet in their hand and only half paying attention.

Kicking a ball around the backyard, going for a bushwalk, letting the kids choose the board games and happily playing along builds and strengthens healthy family relationships. Children feel loved and supported when they know that their parents are happy to spend time with them. Even if parents still have to work, giving children some one on one time in the evenings or weekends is great for them.

Let the kids see you have fun and enjoyment in spending time with them.

From Our Librarian

It is hard to believe that Term 2 is over. If there are any library books hiding at home please send them back so they can be shelved ready for Term 3.

Term 3 is always an exciting term here in the library. The children are already talking about Book Week and pondering the characters they could dress up as. The holidays are a good time to start thinking of Book Character costumes for our annual Book Parade.

We also look forward to our annual Book Fair. The Book Fair for the last two years has been a huge success and has benefitted all of our children by providing more instructional readers and new books for the classroom library shelves. Our goal this year is to keep building on the books children read for pleasure in the classroom so that they have a wide selection to choose from.

Happy holidays everyone.
Miss Gray

From Our Office

Thank you to the parents who are phoning the office of a morning to advise the school that their child will be absent. Please remember to phone the office on 4396 5100 before 9.00am if your child/ren are going to be absent. By doing this you will not have to send in a note.

Entertainment Books for 2015/2016 are available for purchase at the school office. Great value at $60.00.

Thank you
Lyn and Jacqui

Something We’ve Noticed

Our PE teacher, our Music teacher and out Teacher-Librarian do wonderful work in our school. Mrs Bain’s PE lessons are action-packed, Mrs Williams’ Music lessons hum and Miss Gray’s Library lessons motivate. Thank you for making learning fun for our children.

Piano Tuition

There are currently vacancies for piano tuition in Term 3 during school hours. Please contact Chris Hochkins for further details.
Ph. 0414 186 044

Star Awards
Kyden B
Charlotte B
Harry B
Nicholas W
Lily T
Luke W
Chelsea H
Lilly M
Isabella C
Will B
Chloe K
Josie R
Broc C
Tyson S
Izac C
Alyssa R
Laura N
Megan P
Daniel D
Jai B
Anna R

Kalen & Mia - Year 1
Wellbeing Parent Education Workshop
9.15am + 6.30pm Thursday 6th August

Canteen News
Term 2 roster is on the school’s website. Friday 26th June Soup-of-the-day is Chicken and Sweet Corn.

Uniform Shop News
The lost property bin is currently overflowing with uniform items, mostly fleece jackets. The majority of the items do not have names of current students on them. If your child is missing an item of uniform can you please take a look in the lost property bin, located in the undercroft. Items not collected by the end of Week 2 in Term 3 will be considered as a second hand donation to the uniform shop. It is also a timely reminder to ensure your child’s name is on all items of uniform.

Uniform Shop Hours
Current shop hours are: 8.30-11.00am Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. For appointments outside these hours, please call Julie on 0402 311 749.

Early next term a survey will be available to complete on preferred opening hours for the shop. The aim will be to make the uniform shop accessible to as many families as possible. Please take some time to complete the survey when it is available.

Canberra Recount

On the 10th of June at 5:45am all of Year 6 gathered next to the hall in preparation for our big Canberra trip. We got on the bus waved goodbye to our parents and siblings and began on our long 5 hour trip to Canberra.

As soon as we stepped out of the bus in Canberra we all immediately felt the freezing cold temperatures and quickly put on our jackets and jumpers. While at Canberra we explored many of the fantastic things that Canberra had to offer. Some of the things that Year 6 got to experience while at Canberra were: the National Capital Exhibition, the National War Memorial, and the National Dinosaur Museum. On the second day we went to the old and new Parliament house and the Australian Institute of Sport.

On the last day we went to Mount Ainsley and Questacon. On that final day we packed our bags waved goodbye to the friendly staff and all that Canberra had to offer and began our long trip back to our homes in New South Wales. On the trip home we stopped at McDonalds and had lunch. Soon after we arrived back at St Mary’s and went home still coming back to earth from our fantastic Canberra trip!

By Mason and Paris

The Australian Government recognises the importance of all young Australians being able to visit the national capital as part of their Civics and Citizenship education. To assist families in meeting the cost of the excursion the Australian Government has contributed funding of $20 per student under the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate program towards those costs. The rebate is paid directly to the school upon completion of the excursion. We thank the Australian Government for this opportunity.