Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

Beautiful Liturgy
Yesterday we celebrated our first school mass together. The children’s reverence and stillness was exemplary. Our School Captains, Student Parliamentarians and Sports House leaders pledged to do their best for our school during the year. The whole of Year 6 then shared their pledge of school leadership and received a special blessing from Fr Stephen. These outstanding young people are a credit to you, their families, and they make us proud every day.

Swimming Carnival
Next Monday is our St Mary’s Swimming Carnival for Years 2 to 6. Mrs Bain has done an enormous amount of preparation in readiness for the big day. We are fortunate that the carnival is structured to accommodate all swimming levels and the kids always have a ball. We remind parents that this is a school day and children are expected to be present at Mingara Pool for the entire duration of the Carnival. At the end of the day (approximately 2.15) children need to have their names marked off by their class teacher so we can ensure the safety and whereabouts of all children. Buses will return to school before 3.15. Kinder and Year 1 have school as usual but the canteen will be closed just on Monday 15th.

Emergency Drills
This week we practised what we would do in the event of an emergency here at school. It is important that all staff and students are familiar with the processes and procedures. These drills happen each term. We practiced a lock down and an evacuation. Both drills went seamlessly and, though we hope we never need either of them, we are confident that we can keep everyone as safe as possible.

Parent Session – Reading at Home with your Child
Last week a flier went home promoting this useful workshop for parents. Aimed at Kinder to Year 2 parents, the session will give plenty of pointers on what to do and say, when to help and when to wait and how to be encouraging and positive with your child as they learn to read. The session will be offered twice: at 9.15am and repeated at 6.30pm in the Library. Hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Parent Information Night
What a nice group of parents we have at St Mary’s! The friendly, relaxed tone of the Information Evening in the various grades was great to see. We hope the meetings reinforced for you the joy and passion we all share for working in partnership with you to best meet your child’s needs in all facets of their education.

P & F Annual General Meeting
You are invited to come along to the P and F Meeting on Wednesday 17th in the Staffroom. This is one of the many ways you can be connected and informed. Some of the office bearers have now completed their time in office and we thank them sincerely for their input and enthusiasm in their various roles. Hope to see you there at 7pm.

Kind Regards,

J A Baker
Acting Principal
Ash Wednesday
Ash Wednesday, the start of the liturgical season of Lent, is today. All children attended either Mass (4-6) or a Liturgy (K-3), where they were encouraged to reflect on how we can be good people. They also had ashes placed on their forehead. You might like to talk at your house about the things every family member can do to be compassionate, forgiving and kind people during this season of Lent. A thank you to the parents who were able to join us today.

Opening School Mass
Thank you to the parents and carers who were able to join us for our Opening School Mass yesterday. It was great to see so many families joining us as we came together to celebrate the Eucharist together for the first time in 2016.

Sacramental Program
The Sacramental Program includes children in Year 2 (Confirmation), Year 3 (Reconciliation) and Year 4 (Holy Communion), as well as children in older grades who may have previously missed one of the Sacraments. If you have any questions, please contact the school office and I can discuss your individual circumstances.

Catholic Schools Week
Catholic Schools Week is Week 7 (March 7th-11th) of this term. Upcoming newsletters will detail times and dates of liturgies and open classrooms. Watch this space!

Emma Sellars
Religious Education Coordinator
From Our Librarian

This week in the library Kindy will read the text of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. We will focus on the title, where we start reading and the direction in which we read. Kindy will be making beautiful stars ready to hang up in our library.

Years 1 and 2 will be viewing the text Tucking Mummy In by Morag Loh. We are sharing and writing how we help our mums at home. I am learning that we have very helpful children at St Mary’s!!! Year 2 are learning to use the five finger test when choosing a book to read. Ask your child to teach you the five finger test at home!!!

Years 3 - 6 are examining Step 1 of the Information Skills Process
DEFINING: What do I really want to find out?

The first thing I need to do is to define the task.
What are the key words of the task/ question?
What is the purpose of the task?
What is the question asking me to do?
What do I already know about this?

Understanding what the project or assignment question is asking, is crucial in finding information that is relevant and fulfills the purpose of the task.

By the way have you read?....
Snakes of the World by Anna Conda
Happy reading everyone

From Our Office

Invoices for the 2016 school year were e-mailed to our families at the end of January. If you have any questions or you didn’t receive your invoice please contact the office.

A reminder to call the office if your child is going to be absent from school.

Office: ph. 4396 5100
E-mail: smt@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Thank you
Lyn and Jacqui
From Our PE Teacher

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

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- Tini-Tots Program 5—9 years
- Tennis Australia “Hot Shots” Program
- Junior Squads : Junior Comps
- Private and Semi-private lessons
- School Holiday Camps: Social Play

You’re Gonna Love it!

Parents, we need you! You are a crucial part of your child’s education. We want to develop a genuine partnership with every St Mary’s family, allowing us to work together to ensure your child can be their very best.

Important to know:
- Free child-minding will be available at each session
- A coffee van will be available for morning workshops
- Workshops will each have a morning and evening session
- No experience is necessary - Share as little or as much as you feel comfortable with
- Workshops are great opportunities to make connections with other St Mary’s families
- These sessions are different to the sessions from previous years.

Parent Workshops
Term 1 2016

Workshop 1: Reading at home with your K-2 child
- How do I read with my child at home?
- What does reading look like in the classroom?
- Should I ask questions as they read?
- What do I do if they don’t know a word?
Tuesday 16th February, 9:15am and 6:30pm.

Workshop 2: Making the Maths at Home + School Connection
- What does Mathsl ook like in the classroom?
- How can I work with my child at home? (New 2016 activities!)
- How can I best support my child?
Thursday 10th March, 9:15am and 6:30pm.

We welcome you to join us at all Parent Workshop opportunities!