Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

**Bring Your Smiles!**

Next Thursday (February 25th) is our school photo day. Each child has been given an individual envelope detailing packs, pricing and payment options. Please return the envelope to school on photo day (Thursday 25th) with your order or empty if you are not buying photos this year. The school office has Family Photo envelopes for anyone wishing to buy a photo of St Mary’s siblings.

The children need to wear their correct summer school uniform and should have their hair neatly pulled back if it is shoulder length or longer. Thank you for the care you take every day in sending your children to school beautifully presented. Photo day will be no exception, I’m sure.

**Swimming Carnival**

On Monday Years 2 to 6 students attended our swimming carnival at Mingara. Once again Mrs Bain has managed to make the day both competitive and fun for everyone regardless of their swimming level. The attitude and behaviour of the St Mary’s children was outstanding. Throughout the carnival it was so nice to see so many smiling faces and to have many people come over at the end and say thanks for a great day. A day like that doesn’t just happen. It was well organised and we say an earnest thank you to the parents and teachers who helped out in many capacities. We also thank the Year 11 students from St Peters and St Eddie’s who supported us for the day.

Congratulations and good luck to our swimmers who were successful in making it to the next competitive level, the CCC Swimming. They will represent our school on Monday 22nd February. Please help Mrs Bain by returning notes as soon as possible. Thanks.

**Photo Permission Note**

Today an important note is accompanying this newsletter. It is the Photo Consent letter. It is important that you complete and return this note for each child. This note allows your child to be in occasional photographs that may be displayed beyond the classroom door and walls, maybe in the newsletter or possibly on our website or for another specific purpose as listed on the form. It is important that this note is returned each year so our records are up to date. We request that you return the completed note to your class teacher at your earliest convenience.

**Standard Collection Notice**

For your information, on the reverse side of the Photo Permission Note is the Standard Collection Notice which outlines information regarding the reasons for data collection and the importance and respect of privacy in accordance with the Diocesan Schools System Privacy Policy.

**Twenty Five Years Of Service**

Tomorrow evening is the Diocesan Schools Mass where teachers and priests from across the diocese celebrate a special liturgy led by Bishop Peter. As part of that Mass we will be welcoming our new staff & acknowledging Mrs Margaret Kitto for 25 years of Service to Catholic Education. Marg is a member of our fabulous Learning Support Team. We congratulate her and thank her for her energy, patience and expertise. Well done, Marg!

**Parent Reading Workshop**

Thank you to the 65 parents who were able to attend either the morning or evening session yesterday on Reading at Home with Your Child. Mrs Debbie Burns and Mrs Rebecca Hughes outlined what the Literacy Block looks like in all classes and then gave practical tips on how to help and encourage your child with reading at home. They gave a few different strategies and techniques to use and showed how to introduce a story before reading it. We hope you found the session useful. Thank you Debbie and Rebecca for the knowledge and skills you willingly share within our community.

Kind Regards,

J A Baker
Acting Principal
From Our REC

Sacramental Program
Last Friday students received their enrolment form for Reconciliation. This is applicable for children Years 3-6 who have made their Baptism and Confirmation but not yet made the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please note, the compulsory information session is tomorrow afternoon, Thursday 18th. If you have any questions, please contact the school office and I can discuss your individual circumstances. Alternatively, you may like to contact the Parish Office on 4396 4455.

Reconciliation Dates:
Information/Enrolment: Thursday 18th February 4.00pm.
Compulsory Parent and Child Classes:
Wednesday 2nd and 9th March 4.00pm at St Mary’s OR Thursday 3rd and 10th March 4.00pm at St Brendan’s.
Renewal of Baptismal Promises:
Saturday 5th March 5.00pm Mass St Brendan’s OR Sunday 6th March 9.00am Mass St Mary’s.
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Tuesday 15th March 4.00-5.00pm or 5.30-6.30pm.

From Our Family Liaison Officer

Whether it be our new Kinder children starting school or students returning after the long summer holidays, having a consistent routine is a huge help for children starting their school day in a positive way. Children feel more secure and confident when they know what will be happening each morning and what is expected of them.

It takes a bit of effort and organisation on the part of parents to set up routines and keep them consistent, but in the long run it makes mornings much easier, calmer and happier.

For some great information on the benefits of having a morning routine at home and what that entails please click on the link, Morning Routine for School, from the Australian Government’s Raising Children Network website.

Donna Falzon
Family Liaison Officer
**From Our Librarian**

It’s Week 4 and thanks to Kindergarten our library is full of mice! And would you believe they are all trying to run up a clock?! Yes, you’ve guessed it we have been reading Hickory Dickory Dock.

Years 1 and 2 are viewing the text *What Does Your Daddy Do?* We are talking about our dads and what they do when they go to work. Some of us are a bit unsure so Dads you might like to talk about your job for homework this week.

Years 3 - 6 are examining Step 2 of the Information Skills Process

**LOCATING:** Where can I find the information I need?

**What do I need to find out?**
**What sources do I need to find my information from?**
We always tend to go straight to Google but believe it or not the old fashioned book is still a good resource to use. Our Wyong Shire Library has great resources that we can access for assignments as well.

Have you brought your library books back?
It is important to bring your book back each week. If we are still reading a novel we can renew it at school.

By the way have your read?....
*In the Arctic Ocean* by Isa Berg
Happy reading everyone

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**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

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**Star Awards**

Harry B
Zahra D
Noah C
Adelle S
Matilda S
Eve M
Nicholas L
Meika B
Mia P
Samantha W
Kourtney F
Connor M
Reyes M
Keira-Lee D
Hayley B
Nikolas K
Beth F
Tyarna G

**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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**Something We’ve Noticed**

Many parents join us each morning for prayer. We like you sharing these reflective moments with us.

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An Evening with Michael Grose

Australia’s Leading Parent Educator

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What really matters as a parent!
We all want to be the best parent we can be - come and join us as Michael shares his insights into raising happy confident kids and keys to building a strong family.
OLSS Catholic School, TERRIGAL
Tuesday 23 February 7 pm
RSVP: DPC Website
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Mr Dave Ella working with Year 3 on their History Unit.
ST MARY’S SWIMMING CARNIVAL BLUE REIGNS SUPREME YET AGAIN

What a spectacular day we had on Monday! The weather was beautiful just like the behaviour, effort and sportsmanship of every child at St Mary’s School. Every child gave their best whether it was 10m, 20m, 50m or novelty races.

Congratulations to the House Captains and Vice Captains – you led your Colour House with pride and I loved the preparation you put into your House Cheers!!!

We have the most amazing parents at St Mary’s, such a big Carnival would have no chance of running without you! Most schools struggle to get one set of helpers – we had 3 sets of workers with 10m, 20m and 50m events simultaneously running to have children all occupied. We then had another great band of parents who spent an hour and a half in the water giving the kids such a fun experience in the novelty events.

My special thanks to the wonderful 50m helpers – you worked so hard to get through our ever increasing number of heats. It was a huge effort by everyone to continue from 9am until 2pm with almost no break in order that all children could finish their events. I really appreciate what you did for all of our swimmers.

AGE CHAMPION PRESENTATION – waiting for Mr Williams return!!!

CCC Swimming will be next Monday 22nd February. Children participating have received notes and should have them back at school by Friday. Good Luck to all participants.

St Mary’s Cross Country is on Friday 4th March – permission notes will be distributed this week.

Liz Bain
Sports Coordinator

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 Maths look 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!

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