Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

We welcome Deacon Paul Simmons to our Parish. We trust that you enjoy your role of supporting Father Stephen in ministering to the good people of Toukley/Lake Munmorah.

I thought you might like to know a little bit more about the role of a deacon. A deacon is not a priest. He cannot hear confession and give absolution, anoint the sick, or celebrate Mass. The ministry of the deacon in the Catholic Church is described as one of service in three areas: the Word, the Liturgy and Charity. The deacon’s ministry of the Word includes proclaiming the Gospel during the Mass, preaching and teaching. The deacon's liturgical ministry includes various parts of the Mass proper to the deacon, including being an ordinary minister of Holy Communion and the proper minister of the chalice when Holy Communion is administered under both kinds. The ministry of charity involves service to the poor and marginalized and working with parishioners to help them become more involved in such ministry.

**P+F Meeting Tonight**

Please join us tonight as we examine the role of the P+F and explore alternatives that engage many more parents in the life of our school. Our meeting commences at 7.00pm.

**Opening School Mass**

Please join us for our Opening School Mass at 9.15am on Friday. It makes a difference to our school when you join us to celebrate Mass.

**Thank You**

We thank the parents who joined us for the Reading Parent Workshop on Monday. Having approximately 55-60 participants is testament to your willingness to help support your child’s reading progress. If you were unable to join us but would like the session’s handouts (which includes tips on what to do as you listen to your child read at home), please contact our school’s administration. The notes and accompanying bookmark are at the front desk. Term 2’s Parent Education Workshop will focus on Maths.

Sincere thanks to Mrs Hughes and Mrs Burns for so capably leading the Reading Workshops. We are blessed to have you as teachers at our school.

**Please Be Careful**

When parking in either the main car park or in Pandora Parade, please be extremely conscious of the safety of all members of our community. None of us want a tragic accident to occur.

Kind Regards,

K Williams
Principal

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**Upcoming Events**

- **P+F Meeting**
  7.00pm
  Wednesday
  15 February

- **Opening School Mass**
  9.15am
  Friday
  17 February

- **Eastern Suburbs Roosters visit**
  12.30pm
  Friday
  17 February

- **Swimming Carnival**
  Monday
  20 February

- **CCC Swimming Carnival**
  Monday
  27 February

- **Ash Wednesday Mass**
  9.15am
  Wednesday
  1 March

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All relevant school notes and letters are posted on our website. Please click on **News and Events** and then **Letters, Notes, Timetables**
Opening School Mass
Our K-6 Opening School Mass is this Friday 17th February. We welcome parents, grandparents and new families to celebrate our first school mass for 2017 with us in the church. Mass begins at 9.15am. Please join us.

Sacramental Program
On Friday 3rd February, students received their enrolment form for Reconciliation. This is applicable for children in 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 on Thursday 23rd February at 4pm. Please take your enrolment forms and $30 donation on this day to the church. 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 23rd February 4.00pm.
Compulsory Parent and Child Classes:
Week 1: 28th February to 5th March
Week 2: 7th March to 12th March
Week 3: 14th March to 19th March
Week 4: 21st March to 26th March

Parents Renewal of Commitment Mass:
11th March @ 5pm St Brendan’s OR 12th March 9am St Mary’s

Children’s Renewal of Baptismal Promises:
18th March @ 5.00pm St Brendan’s OR 19th March 9am St Mary’s.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Thursday 30th March 4pm St Mary’s.

Ash Wednesday
This year, Ash Wednesday falls on March 1st. The older children will be coming together for Mass while the younger children will participate in a Liturgy. Years 2-6 will attend Mass at 9.15am and Kinder and Year 1 will have a Liturgy at 12pm. Parents, we invite you to both of these occasions.

Catholic Schools Week
Catholic Schools Week is Week 6 (March 6th-10th) of this term. Upcoming newsletters will detail times and dates of liturgies and open classrooms. Watch this space!

Liz Hartge
Acting Religious Education Coordinator

From Our Family Liaison Officer
Children being allowed to take responsibility for tasks and problem solve gives them a sense of accomplishment and empowerment in their own abilities and boosts their confidence enormously.

As parents/carers what are we doing to help build responsibility and independence in our children? It is good to occasionally reflect and ask ourselves, “What am I doing for my child that they can do for themselves?” Do they carry their own school bag? Do they unpack their own bag of an afternoon? Do they make sure their reader and lunchbox goes in their bag of a morning? These are all simple things that even the youngest Kinder child can be responsible for which will help them develop greater independence and confidence.

It’s not unusual to sometimes feel that things are easier and simpler if we just “do it ourselves” but by always doing things ourselves are we actually robbing children of opportunities to grow and develop? While it can be frustrating for us and take a lot longer, children learn new skills and improve with regular practice when we can provide opportunities for them to take on more responsibility.
**KidsMatter**

A big part of starting school for children is developing friendships. Parents/carers may worry about how well their children are making friends and fitting in at school, but it’s important to remember that friendships take time to develop.

Every child is unique and approach things in different ways. Some are very confident and outgoing and seem to have no problems in approaching children and organising games while others tend to be more reserved and can take a cautious “wait and see” approach to those around them.

No matter what personality your child has, being able to form positive friendships with their peers is important for them to feel connected and comfortable at school, but it can take time.

The complex social skills that children need to make friends develop over time and are learned from those around them.

The KidsMatter link, “Everyone Needs a Friend”, has some great information about the different skills children need to develop friendships and what parents/carers can do to help them.

**From Our Librarian**

It’s Week 3 Kindergarten are reading a text about spiders! Amazingly they love to climb up water spouts in the rain! Yes we have been reading *Incy Wincy Spider*. Nursery rhymes are great texts to help beginning readers start the path of their reading journey. Why not share some nursery rhymes at home this week with your Kindy children.

Years 1 and 2 are viewing the text *Tucking Mummy In* by Morag Loh. We are discussing our mums and how they help us. We are responding to this text by writing and drawing how we help our mums!

Years 3 - 6 will be examining how to work on projects and assignments using the Information Skills Process. The children are making a book mark outlining the key steps in making a project manageable as well as evaluating information sources on the web. It would be great if this bookmark could be laminated but please keep it safe and handy next to your computer at home for future reference.

By the way have your read?.... *Crossing Roads Safely* by Luke Bothways

Happy reading everyone

Ms Gray
Librarian

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**From Our Music Teacher**

A reminder that all Year 3 and 4 students require a recorder for Music in 2017. Recorders are available from the Uniform Shop for $10.00.

Thanks
Mrs Williams

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**Star Awards**

Marli C
Ava S
Lucas C
Edward A
Summer M
Abbie R
Flynn R
Ellie R
Savannah T
Harrison R
Halle T
Marshall S
Charlize P
Nate M
Bella D
Shauna R
Monique R
Bailey S
Mikaela M
Cohan L
Xavier R
Nicholas L
Cooper S
Declan P

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**From Our Office**

Thank you to all our families who have commenced regular payments toward their 2017 school fees. This assists the school to meet it’s financial commitments as they fall due.

A reminder that your fee statements and newsletters are sent to you via email. If you are not receiving your statements or newsletter please give us a call at the office so we can update your email address.

Have a great week!

Julie, Jacqui & Leesa
From Our PE Teacher

Diocesan Sports Trials
Last Friday we had 3 athletes travel to Newcastle to take part in the trials for Polding Sports teams. Congratulations to Grace H on making the Polding Team for Tennis. Grace came 2nd at the Broken Bay trials and now gets to compete in the NSW All Schools Competition for Polding in Newcastle.

Congratulations Bailey L for your efforts in the cricket trials. Although not making the team Bailey was voted best wicketkeeper for the day.

Congratulations Joe M on your efforts in the Tennis trials. Joseph played extremely well against boys who play competition tennis every weekend, a great effort to make the top 4 in the Diocese.

Sydney Roosters Fan Day
Central Coast Fan Day is on this Friday 17th February at Central Coast Stadium 4.30 – 6.30.
Open Training Session, Player signings, Come and Try Clinic, face painting, Rocky the Rooster and giveaways.

Swimming Carnival – Monday 20th February Mingara
Thank you for all of the wonderful helpers – look forward to seeing you!
Notes went home yesterday – if by chance you have missed out, Jacqui has them in the office.

Liz Bain
Sports Coordinator

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

Uniform Shop News
Uniform Shop hours are Monday-Friday 8.15am—9.45am.
This Friday morning the 17th February the uniform shop will be closed.
Sorry for any inconvenience caused.
Please contact Leesa on 0432 584 683 for any enquiries.