Dear Parents,

Happy new year and welcome back to the 2015 school year and to our ‘new look’ newsletter! We have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming the children back to school today and it has been a delight to see them excited to be in their new classes, happy to be together with friends, getting to know new students and enjoying being back to the school routine. Tomorrow we welcome the new Kindies so this too promises to be an exciting and joyful day too!

We would like to extend a special welcome to the 12 new families and 20 new students who have joined us this term. The St Mary’s community is famous for being warm and welcoming and we hope you will soon feel part of the community. We encourage new parents to get involved in what is going on here at school. We look forward to getting to know you.

Welcome also to 7 new (and not so new as well as returning) members to our teaching team!

Hayley Dwyer
Hayley graduated from Charles Sturt in 2013 and she has been teaching in and around Wagga, her home town, in the role of relief teacher. Hayley is very excited to have her own class and to be joining the Kindy team at St Mary’s team!

Lauren Hunter
Lauren completed her Bachelor of Education in 2012 and taught at Murrumburrah Public School for a year before taking some time to travel. Lauren is a local from the Bribbaree area and she too is thrilled to be joining the team at St Mary’s. Lauren will be teaching 1G.

Sally McFadyen
Sally and her husband have just moved to Young from Coleambally. Sally taught for 9 years at St Stevens. Sally will be joining the Year 2 team and brings with her a great deal of expertise, particularly with regards to Making Jesus Real.

Vicki Eastwood
Vicki hardly needs an introduction being such a well-known and highly respected long term teacher at St Mary’s. We welcome Vicki back from maternity leave and look forward to having her positive and professional presence in the school again.

Nerida MacDonnell
Vicki and Nerida will be co-teaching KW this year. Nerida is a very experienced early years educator and she is well known throughout the western region of schools for her expertise. Nerida is joining a group of St Mary’s teachers who make the trip from Cootamundra each day and we are thrilled to have her join the team.

John Keighley
John is known to many of the children and the parents in his role as part-time Music teacher and relief teacher during 2014. This year John has taken on the role of PE teacher and all classes K – 6 will benefit from his expertise in this area. John will also be teaching 6G on Friday’s.

Luke Smith
Again, Luke hardly needs an introduction having taught at St Mary’s in the past and having been a regular relief teacher last year, School Chaplain for the later part of the year and 5B teacher with Mrs Taylor during Term 4. It is great to have Luke on the team on a permanent basis. Luke will be class teacher for 4G.

Dates to Remember

Thurs 6th Feb
Opening School Mass, 9.15am

Wednesday 11th Feb
Year 3 to 6 Swimming Carnival

Thursday 12th Feb
iPad Meeting 6.00pm

Friday 13th Feb
Summer Sport Trials
Basketball and Cricket

Monday 16th Feb
Summer Sport Trials
Tennis

Wednesday 18th Feb
Ash Wednesday

Thursday 19th Feb
Family Fun Night at Pool

Friday 20th Feb
Western Region Swimming—Boorowa

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to the following students who celebrated their birthday during the holidays and this week

Thomas Butt
Grace Gibson
Joshua Sargent
Sophie Moloney
Max Kirkwood
Mackenzie Blake
Xavier Capra
Holly Coddington
Caitlin McDonald
Nate Reid
Isabella Turner
Alexis Moran
Andrew Skillcorn
Joseph Brunton
Catarina Lewis-Caruso
Archie Challen
Archie Dowdell
Jaryd Mills
Payten Ashton
James Cronin
Matthew Noakes
Chloe Norris
William Newell
Victoria Kennedy
Any school is only as strong as the teaching staff and we are very pleased and proud to have such a highly professional, enthusiastic and committed team in 2015! On behalf of all of us, welcome to all our new teachers! We hope you will be very happy at St Mary’s and look forward to getting to know you and working with you to continue the development of the school.

New Beginnings
New beginnings are a time of excitement, renewal and optimism and we are aiming to give everyone the best possible start to the school year. Parents and carers play a big role on this process and we have been discussing how best we can support you all in this role. In the past, parents will be familiar with the “Back to School” evening which usually included a presentation in the Hall and time for parents to be with class teachers to hear about the class routines, expectations etc. Teachers have noticed over the years that a significant number of parents have been unable to attend the “Back to School” evening and so miss vital information. We understand that it can be tricky to get to meetings in the evenings and so this year we are trying something new. Teachers will be preparing comprehensive “Welcome Back” letters this week with all the information they would normally convey at the “Back to School” night. These Welcome Back letters will outline the curriculum this term, class routines and expectations and any other information teachers may wish to pass on. These letters will be sent this Friday and we urge parents to read the information carefully and contact class teachers if you have any questions.

The feedback we have received from parents and teachers is that the one-to-one parent and teacher conferences are effective and appreciated by parents and teachers. So this year a conference session has been planned early in the year – week beginning 9th February - so that parents and teachers can establish the partnership between home and school and discuss goals for the children. The emphasis of this first conference session is for parents to share information about their child; their past educational experiences, how they learn best and their interests. We hope this opportunity will help to map out goals and expectations for the year ahead and set up children, teachers and parents for a successful year.

Welcome Back Family Fun Night
The Community Council would like to invite all our St Mary’s families to another fun evening at the Young Aquatic Centre on 19th February. I am sure you will agree that this is a great way to start the year and will give us the chance to welcome new families to the community and give returning families the chance to catch up after the break. Do watch out for the flyer in your child’s bag in the near future.

Communication
Effective communication between home and school is essential and we would like ALL parents to take a few minutes to ensure that the lines of communication are open!

Skoolbag – It is required that you re-select your child’s class for this year so that you receive the message/alerts relevant to your child’s class. To do this click on more, then setup and select the class for this year. New families will receive information on how to download Skoolbag tomorrow.

Contact details – please if you have moved, changed phone number or email address, do let us know as soon as possible so we can update our records. Please ensure emergency contact details are up to date too.

IMPORTANT ALERT – CHILDREN WITH SEVERE NUT ALLERGIES ATTEND ST MARY’S
A reminder to all parents and carers that there are a number of children attending St Mary’s with nut allergies, some life threatening. It is therefore essential that St Mary’s be a nut free zone. This is the responsibility of every family at St Mary’s. Please ensure that no nuts or foods with traces of nuts are sent to school. Please be aware that traces of nuts can be found in the most unlikely of food products and so we implore you to read labels carefully and be very careful about what foods are sent to school.

Thank you for your co-operation!

Assemblies in 2015
Morning assembly will continue to take place on Mondays and Fridays and parents and carers are always welcome to attend. Class assembly items will now be scheduled during Friday morning assemblies and we hope this will assist parents in being able to attend when their child’s class is performing. Parents will be informed prior to their child’s class assembly. For more information please read Heart Matters section.
In Conclusion...

Staff at St Mary’s participated in an inspirational day of professional development yesterday with visiting presenter Mojgan Tosif (Master Facilitator) on the “Virtues Project”. The Virtues Project has been implemented with amazing results in schools in Australia and overseas and promises to impact positively on the children’s personal, social and academic development. From the Virtues Project website:

“Character is destiny. Virtues are the content of our character. The Virtues Project™ nurtures our children in the skills and qualities they need to be successful in school and in life. Although they are the oldest practices in the world, virtues are essential to the true goal of education – intelligence plus character.”

Please keep up to date each week with the Virtue of the Week and the information provided in the newsletter to help you to support your child in recognizing that virtue within them and in encouraging them to practice that virtue.

We hope Mojgan will be able to visit St Mary’s again later this year and offer a parent workshop on the Virtues Project which is equally as successful as a positive approach to parenting.

Very much looking forward to seeing you at school at the upcoming events or at the welcome Back Family Fun Evening!

With best wishes,

Louise Grant
Principal
Heart Matters

Starting School
Whether your child is starting school or returning from the holidays there are things you can do to make the transition stress-free and enjoyable for all.

Firstly, be positive about the pending school year. Students quickly pick up on negative cues. Your discussions about school should reflect your own excitement about the year ahead.

Ensure that your child has all the equipment necessary to begin school. Concerns about having the ‘right’ materials can hamper a positive start to the school year.

Meet your child’s classroom teacher(s). Your interest and concern will be appreciated by teachers as well as the student.

Discuss learning goals for the year. Guiding children to set their own goals, doing their best, and focusing on improvement are far better than demanding ‘top’ marks. Deciding on appropriate ‘rewards’ for improvement can also benefit your child’s start to the year.

Ensure interesting and healthy lunches for your child. Plan and prepare meals together. A healthy and adequate diet is needed to sustain mental and physical development throughout the school day.

ASSEMBLIES 2015: The school timetable has undergone significant change in 2015 to accommodate innovation with planning and other curriculum initiatives within the various learning stages. With this in mind we are trialling a new assembly model where one class each Friday morning will lead the school assembly with a short presentation of class-based activities. Parents and community members are invited to attend our Friday morning assemblies which run from 8.50 to approximately 9.10. Our first Friday class assembly will be on 13th March (Week 3) and will be led by 6B.

Swimming Carnival
A reminder that our Primary Swimming Carnival will be held on Wednesday 11th February. Any Year 2 students who are turning 8 and wish to be eligible for the Western Region Carnival may attend and compete in 50m/100m events. Could all parents please ensure they have completed and returned the event nomination form given out last year. More forms are available from the office if required. Nominations may not be made on the day! More information about the day will be sent home next week.
FOCUS ON FAITH

Opening School Mass

Our Opening School Mass will be celebrated at St Mary’s Church, week 2, Friday, 6th February. The Mass will commence at 9.15am and students are asked to go directly to the Church to start the school day. Buses will bring all students back to school after the Mass. We will acknowledge our School Leaders during the Liturgy. They will make their pledge of service and receive their leadership badges.

MJR (Making Jesus Real): Our focus virtue this week is “Friendliness.” Friendliness is being a good friend, through good times and bad. You take an interest in other people and make them feel welcomed. You share your belongings, your time and yourself. Friendliness is the best cure for loneliness.

What do we feel when we practice it? At the beginning it might feel “fake” or awkward. However, when you get the hang of it, it will start to feel really good to be friendly. You will see or perceive what consequence your friendliness has on other people, and will realize that even just trying to be friendly (without expecting anything in return) will fill you up with a sense of contentment with yourself.

How do YOU feel when others are friendly towards you? How do you feel when you are new to a group (for example, the first day at school, work or team sports) and someone comes up, tells you their name and starts talking to you in a friendly way? I personally feel very good. I bet you do too. When people feel that you are interested in them they will feel happy, good about themselves, interesting and cared for.

Think about applying this to someone you actually don’t like. How would they feel if you start being friendly toward them? Maybe at first they would be cautious and not believe it, but if you are sincere and persevere, they will realize you do mean it and will open up to you. This in time is inevitable.

From the Parish:

Sacramental Programme 2015

Information from Fr Tom…There will be a general information night for PARENTS ONLY regarding ALL SACRAMENTS and it will be held on the 25th February 2015 at 7pm in St Mary’s School Hall. At this meeting the dates and times of the parent nights for each sacrament will be advised as well as the dates of the School of Religion classes to be held for each sacrament. On this night parents will need to be present to enrol their child (ren) for the specific sacraments they wish them to receive this year. If you want your child enrolled you need to be at this meeting.

Children’s Liturgy in the Parish of St Mary’s

Children’s Liturgy requires a new co-ordinator. The job involves compiling the roster, recruiting new facilitators, keeping worksheets and resources up to date and generally over-seeing the smooth running of this popular programme. If you are keen and interested, even if you want to work on this as a team, please phone Suzie Duff on 0427 825 363.

Prayer moment

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”
Philippians 2:4

Blessings,
Jeannette Albert (REC)
Canteen News

Just a reminder for those parents using Flexischools please remember to change over your children to the correct class for 2015. This will ensure they receive their lunch on time.

For online orders here is the information.
@flexischool.com.au. Orders come directly through to school via this app. It can be done on your desktop or mobile. Both recess and lunch orders can be done this way.

The canteen Roster went home with your child today.

Canteen Roster

Friday 30 Jan  Chloe Powderly
Monday 2 Feb  Traci Foster, Sharna Brownlie
Tuesday 3 Feb  Sue Hardy
Wed 4 Feb  Megan Moloney

CHRISTINE WISHART’S DANCE STUDIO, YOUNG WILL BE HOLDING REGISTRATION DAYS ON THURSDAY, 29 JANUARY FROM 3.00 – 6.00 and SATURDAY, 31 JANUARY 2015 AT THE SOUTHERN CROSS CINEMAS BETWEEN 10.00am – 12.30pm.

BALLET, CONTEMPORARY, TAP, HIP/HOP & JAZZ CLASSES WILL BE HELD IN YOUNG COMMENCING MONDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2015.

WE OFFER TAP EXAMS, EISTEDDFOD WORK, LOCAL PERFORMANCES AND END OF YEAR CONCERTS.

FOR ENROLMENTS AND ENQUIRIES PLEASE PHONE CHRISTINE WISHART ON 0269 426 201 or 0427 782 954.

Karen Leez School of Dance

Its the start of another year. I hope you have all had a wonderful break. I would like to place my enrolment info in your school newsletters this week. Something along these lines if you can fit it all in that would be much appreciated. I am aware that there is a cost involved at some schools and am happy to pay this (please forward payment details).